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MASONIC TRUTHS

A Letter and a Document

by

ARTHUR A. SCHOMBURG

Grand Secretary
Prince Hall Masons
State of New York

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Foreword

We believe that our brothers will be pleased to read the information printed regarding the regularity of so-called Colored Masons in 1860. This pamphlet is exceedingly rare and it will be useful for the feeling that existed in those days.

We have read the article of Prof. Arnold P. Whiting, 32°, "Rousing of Inferior Races," in the National Trestle Board and beg the opportunity to answer his remarks in justice to the Prince Hall Masons in the United States.

We are reminded that "in all communities of men it should be recognized that before God, before the law and in the enjoyment of public utilities all men are equal. It is an axiomatic principle evolved from the highest known ethics of the age, that in the estimation of justice the only standard of excellence is that which rests upon the tripod of physical, intellectual and spiritual development. Upon these fundamental ideas must forever rest the structure of that future national life which will ultimately bind all mankind into one universal brotherhood."

And again Solon well said "that was the best government where an injury to a single citizen was resented as an injury to the whole state." How much more pleasant to read an article where the object works to bring about a better feeling in the seas of difficulties that at present manifest themselves in our commonwealth among its various races. We believe men, no matter of what race, can respect each other without the hobby of raising the dust of social equality. What we demand and are entitled to is plain justice, nothing but equality before the law. Where is the white brother or the honest man who will deny to any citizen a right to work, eat and live within his ability in the republic of opportunities, without going out of his way to slur him because he wears the livery of the burnished sun? And like Solomon, "look not down upon me because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept." Knowing that his fathers worked in the American vineyards for generations to grow wheat, corn, cotton and rice that fed legions of whites and helped build up the nation; that these black people helped the nation during the perilous days of uncertainty and darkness, more than that, even shouldered arms in all the wars of the nation; it shed its blood with Crispus Attucks at Boston Common on May 5, 1770, with Peter Salem at Bunker Hill where the names of Negroes are duly inscribed on marble of that memorable monument where Daniel Webster gave expression of tribute in his matchless eloquence. In the revolutionary war with George Washington and Lafayette. With Major General Nathaniel Greene, scattering the bones of Negroes wherever they fell in their encounters with enemy forces; with Perry at Lake Erie, with General Jackson at New Orleans where his own proclamation is sufficient evidence of such fact. In the civil war to preserve the nation from its enemies with more than one hundred thousand faithful over that sanguinary field, at New Market Heights where General Butler attested to their power to hold the wings of the American Union forces against all the Confederates forces and hell itself.

For as Whiting well says in your pages, "We have been afraid to face our own prejudices lest they should give the lie to our professions." Selah!

What the Prince Hall Masons are seeking is only non-interference with their humble patrimony. They are in all things unconcerned with the brilliancy of wealth that permeates white Masonic

associations, whether these are in themselves clandestine or as regular as driven snow in its whiteness. Prince Hall Masons in America are the last persons who are desirous of promiscuously slipping into white lodges to be purposely denied a privilege well known as an inherent right of the subordinate lodge. He may look for that expression of brotherhood abroad where, in the language of Burns, "a man is a man for a that and a that" and where men are schooled in the true elements that go to make the universality of the craft and where Masonry is the real handmaid of the Christian religion.

If it is not the desire of a brother to injure his less informed, why prate over this inferiority? The natural rights of the poorest as well as the richest are rendered sacred by divine law and ought, therefore, to be profoundly respected. In the fundamental laws of the land, by the various amendments to the Constitution, they are further protected as citizens in their enjoyments of the common weal. If it is not the desire of a brother to injure others, why should such a delicate matter be left to the mood and whim of the few? This panacea must be portioned according to the "mood and whim" of Prof. Whiting and his cohorts. What principles of right and wrong can come from advancing such hodge-podge propositions? We believe the matter should be handled with more adroitness and Christian broadmindedness. Races like men will keep their places no longer than the appointed time. The ramifications of evolution are such that at this very moment, no doubt, great mental forces are at work to bring the scales of righteousness to balance evenly.

The most powerful church organization in the world, which Macaulay, in his essays reviewing Ranke's "History of the Popes," said in forceful words that the tower of its churches was gloriously flourishing whilst Europe had seen monarchies destroyed and in this great war just brought to a close cities have been reduced to ashes and history has repeated itself. That great organization preaches above all things humility and gratitude. We hope the Prince Hall Masons of America will keep to those words, not to mortal man, but to Eternal God for implanting in him an eternal soul which knows no "inferior" quality nor "superior" station. The mortal part strives for the attainment of all qualities of moral manhood, living the life a citizen should within the state which safeguards his life, his home and his family, answering to the call of the nation promptly and without quibble or mental reservation, but ready to die if necessary, whether right or wrong, in defence of the fatherland, as his forbears have always done in the nation.

During the present war we did not notice Illustrious Prince Whiting petitioning that all inferiors should be relegated to the rear military classes. In such times these men are conspicuous by their absence and for their silence in regard to the protection of social equality. TheNegro soldiers were sent on an equal footing to die in Europe and when the war was over and the damnable carnage had ended, might is again enthroned to rule over right. What a beautiful logical proposition for the Grand Architect of the Universe to look down upon with complacency!

What of it if the darker races are getting consciousness, isn't the world large enough for the people of all bloods to dwell therein?

Are not the wild beasts of the field living together without hindrance, as they have done since the foundation of the world? The force of resistance with the whites is the consciousness of having robbed the weaker races of all that was lootable, their consciousness squeams with the animus furandi and they are afraid the worm will some day turn, for a thousand and one wrongs unjustly inflicted.

The clear meaning of brotherhood is aptly obscured by the professor's beautiful "abstraction." It is no longer the true and plain Masonry handed down to us, but as provided by a variety of the American people, who have injected all their prejudices and their "beautiful abstractions," by which evasion can be kept up. And now after a century of all kind of sophistry and clap-trap devices he feels that the day of judgment may come regarding the application of Masonry in its simplicity with the tenets as exemplified through the world.

In the Spanish-American war we find the negro at San Juan Hill leading Roosevelt to victory; in Europe, aiding the white race to save itself from the ferocity of barbarians. Now comes Prof. Whiting to tell us that "the whites are entitled to a place on the higher level of humanity" and further that "only we want them to know and keep their places as inferior in the scheme of society and civilization." There is no denying the fact that the whites today enjoy the higher level, but they will have to keep pegging away at it. In the past others were on the top round of the ladder. History will absolutely and unqualifiedly repeat itself, and others in the human procession may succeed the whites just as unerringly as day follows night.

Prof. Whiting not being satisfied with many things, finds that "the soul of the white man revolts against any such proposition." Yet he does not give the tell-tale facts that the souls of white men did not revolt when they were raising millions of mixed breeds in the country; when they were bleaching or whitening up the masses of blacks, making possible such a large number of individuals whose racial nomenclature is uninterminable by any rule; they do not belong to the black, and have by all rights a better position with those in whose veins courses the best blood of the southland.

We will now close with the words of C. G. Davis in "Why Not Now" (Boston, 1909): "Today selfishness rules mankind; our social, political and business institutions are rotten. Hypocrisy shows its hideous grin in every institution that man has founded. We pretend one thing and perform another. We preach brotherhood and place the foot upon the neck of the unfortunate. We are galvanized with forms of righteousness while the heart is rotten."

[The following article, written by the Grand Secretary of Prince Hall Masons of the State of New York and associate editor of the Masonic Quarterly Review, is well written and logical throughout. It is well to understand the position of these colored Masons, even though they are not recognized by the white bodies of the craft, and the writer to whom space is here given is truly representative and competent to speak for his people.—Editor N. T. B.]

DOCUMENTS

Respecting the

CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE GRAND LODGES

of

HAMBURG AND NEW YORK.

I. On the exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction of Grand Lodges.

II. On the Inquiry concerning the Regularity of Colored Lodges.

Published by the Masonic Historical Society in Brooklyn

"Audiatur et altera pars"

Extract from the Minutes of the Masonic Historical Society in Brooklyn (Engbund New York).

(68th Meeting, April 24th, 1860).

The following preamble and resolutions, being moved and seconded, were unanimously adopted, to wit:

Whereas the report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Grand Lodge of New York of June 1859, has published to the masonic world statements concerning matters in controversy between the Gr. Lodges of New-York and Hamburg, which are at variance with the evidence of documents in the possession of this society; and

Whereas the controversy existing between these Grand Lodges has become a matter of masonic history, involving important principles of masonic law, usage, and comity, to whose elucidation the publication of all historical documents, showing the facts bearing upon the question at issue, will materially contribute;—be it, therefore

Resolved that this society request, and hereby does request, one of its members (Br. ——— familiar with the English language) to prepare accurate translations into English, of such documents from the society's archives, as relate to the matters in dispute between the Gr. Lodges of Hamburg and New York, and that such translations be printed in pamphlet form, at the expense of the printing fund of this society, and be distributed among American Freemasons;

Resolved that the President of this society, Br. R. Barthelmess, be, and is hereby, requested to order and superintend such publication and distribution.

J. E. KAHL,

[A true Copy.] Secretary, Engbund New-York.

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the resolutions of the "Masonic Historical Society in Brooklyn (Engbund New York)" the following documents are submitted to the inspection and judgment of the Masonic World. They show the acts of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg relative to the question of Exclusive Territorial Jurisdiction of Grand Lodges, and also relative to an Inquiry concerning the Regularity of Colored Lodges, so called, which it had become necessary for the Grand Lodge of Hamburg to make, on account of applications for recognition, brought directly before that Grand Body, in behalf of a colored Lodge in Liberia.

The acts of Hamburg have been represented in the Report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Grand Lodge of New-York, to that Grand Body, at their communication of June 1859, in such a manner as to convey erroneous impressions to masons not familiar with the actual occurrences; and the criticisms embodied in that report are as harsh and unbrotherly as they are unjust in view of the true facts.

The press, both masonic and public, caught up the subject at the time, and published misrepresentations concerning the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, calculated to throw odium on a Grand Body, standing high in the estimation of all European Grand Lodges, and second to no Grand Body in the world in its devotion to the true principles of Freemasonry.

The undersigned, in his capacity of W. M. of one of the daughter lodges of Hamburg, felt it incumbent upon him, then to transmit to the *Masonic Mirror & Keystone,* published at Philadelphia, and to the *New-York Courier,* extracts from the Minutes of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, showing the injustice of these attacks, and to ask for them the same publicity which had been given to the latter.

Both these periodicals refused to acceed to his request, which the entire world of letters must concede to have been fair and proper. An example has thus been given, by leading masons, of denying a hearing to a party attacked. It is fit that this fact should be generally known among masons. It shows how far passion and prejudice can blunt the sense of justice and fairness, which is a constituent of every human heart, and whose development and refinement is one of the noblest tasks of Freemasonry. It will, perhaps, incline hundreds of honorable masons to an attentive perusal of the documents hereinafter published, who have, perhaps, until now, taken no particular interest in the questions at issue between the Grand Lodges of Hamburg and New-York. For the love of fair play is deeply rooted in the American heart, and conduct like that of the editors alluded to is calculated to provoke censure from every honest man, much more from every true Freemason.

The Report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence being, to a large extent, based upon reports of the Representative of the Grand Lodge of New York with the Grand Lodge of Saxony, Br. von Mensch, the undersigned also felt impelled to address, to the latter, an elaborate communication, with the view of convincing him of the errors into which he had been led by his official zeal in behalf of the Grand Body, which he represents.

The reply of Br. von Mensch to this communication shows that the latter had not entirely failed of its effect. That W. Br. had already protested, in a letter to the Gr. Secretary Br. Austin, and in this reply to the undersigned also protests, against the manner in which his reports to the Gr. Lodge of Saxony had been used and distorted by the Committee on Foreign Correspondence.

All these documents, being necessary elements of a full history of the controversy existing between the Grand Lodges, have been deposited, by the undersigned, in the Archives of the Masonic Historical Society, whose president he has the honor to be, and are now published, by the resolution of that society, and at its expense, for the purpose of diffusing correct historical information on a topic of more than ordinary interest to American Freemasons, and especially to those of the State of New York.

It is hoped that a full understanding of the facts bearing upon the controversy will have a tendency to correct the erroneous impressions, now prevailing with great numbers of masons, respecting the views entertained, and the position assumed, by the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, and concerning the regularity and fair masonic standing of its daughter lodges in this state, Pythagoras No. 1 and Franklin No. 2.

It is also hoped that peace and harmony may finally result from this elucidation, and that elements long estranged may, by degrees, be led back to that fraternal concord which should ever link heart to heart through the entire chain of masons, the world over.

Brooklyn, June, 1860.

R. BARTHELMESS,
President Mas. Hist. Soc.
(Engbund New York.)

I.

From the Minutes of the Regular Quarterly Meeting of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, Febr. 27, 1858.

(Minutes No. 64 p. 2. § VII.)

"The latter (the Gr. M.) observed that he had received, from the Rev. Br. Klug in Lübeck, communications of interest from a letter, dated Sept. 25, 1857, of a young man who had resided some years in Monrovia in the Negro State of Liberia, concerning the condition of lodges there, and read extracts copied from that letter. According to its statements, there was one lodge in Monrovia, Oriental Lodge No. 1 and a Grand Lodge, Restoration Gr. Lodge, Republic of Liberia, to which, however, no other lodge belonged. According to the letter there was on the West coast but one other lodge, in Grand Bassa which had received a dispensation from the Gr. L. (of England?) but as yet no charter, and probably would not receive one, as a variety of irregularities had occured in the same. The lodge in Monrovia consisted, with few exceptions, almost entirely of colored members; but it numbered among the latter almost all the higher officials, clergymen, physicians &c. The Gr. M., Br. Roberts Ex-President of the Republic, was at present on a diplomatic voyage to Europe, and intended to establish correspondences in England and France. The letter also expressed the wish, to enter into correspondence with German lodges, and Br. Klug had addressed him (the Gr. M. of Hamburg), in this regard. However willingly he would respond to this proposal, as it would be desirable for German brethren visiting Liberia to find a friendly lodge there, still he had hesitated to meet this wish without preliminary inquiry. The origin of the lodge was not explained by the letter; the question, whether it was lawfully constituted and to be considered just and perfect, appeared doubtful. He had, therefore, applied to our Representative in London, Br. Cohn, and from him received the information, that the Grand Lodge of England had no knowledge of an Oriental Lodge No. 1, in Monrovia or of a Restoration Grand Lodge of Liberia; neither had the former applied for recognition. The Gr. Lodge of England had, on the West coast of Africa, besides five lodges at the Cape, one in Bathurst in Gambia, two in Cape Coast Castle, one in Sierra Leone, but none in Grand Bassa, nor in Monrovia and could, therefore, not recognize the latter. It was true, the letter from Monrovia left it to be inferred, that the brethren of that place had gathered their information principally from American books on masonry, but it was highly improbable that the lodge had been constituted by one of the Gr. Lodges of America, or would be recognized by them, as a majority of its members were colored persons. As long as the lodge did not show, how it had originated, and that it had been constituted and recognized by a lawful Gr. Lodge, it would have to be regarded as a clandestine lodge with which no intimate connection could be formed. He would request Br. Klug to call the attention of the brethren in Liberia to this defect, and to call upon them to take the necessary steps for its reception

into the brotherhood of a lawful Gr. Lodge. The Restoration Grand Lodge of Liberia being based upon a single lodge, and that one not properly legalized, could lay no claim to the name of Gr. Lodge, not even of Provincial Lodge. As soon as it fulfilled these conditions, the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg would readily enter into correspondence with it."

II.

(Minutes of May 6, 1858, No. 65 p. 2. § IV.)

"With regard to § VII. (of the last minutes) he (the Gr. M.) remarked that he had received information about the lodge in Monrovia, since the last meeting of the Gr. Lodge, from Br. Goedelt, now a resident of Hamburg, and belonging to that lodge. It would appear that it had been constituted by a Northern American Gr. Lodge. Br. Goedelt, (who has written to Monrovia for more exact information) was of opinion that it was the Gr. Lodge of Massachusetts, but probably the Negro Grand Lodge of that state. This would not be without influence upon our views of the legitimacy of this lodge, as, in this case, the question, which had hitherto not been discussed, would have alone to be considered, whether our Gr. Lodge recognized as lawful lodges and grand lodges the lodges and grand lodges of colored persons existing in North America, and which, it was known, were considered as clandestine by the Grand Lodges of that country, a question of considerable importance, which he would call up for discussion at the next quarterly meeting in August, when futher inquiries would enable him to lay before the Gr. Lodge the views of the other European Gr. Lodges, especially of the Gr. Lodge of England. With this view, he would hand the Br. Representatives a circular addressed to them, and request them to forward it, together with No. 65 of the minutes!

III.

Circular of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, May 1858.

The Gr. Lodge of Hamburg begs leave to broach a subject of general interest, and to request her beloved sisters, the Gr. Lodges of Europe in intimate correspondence with her, to be pleased to consider the same, and to enable her, by communicating their views, to propose such measures as are calculated to meet the approbation and consent of all, or at least of a majority, of the sisters.

Besides the lodges of Haiti, there exist in America a great number of lodges of colored persons, negroes, mulattoes, &c., in some North American states separate, in many others as f. i. Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, Maryland, &c., combined under Gr. Lodges, the latter being again subordinate to a "National Gr. Lodge of North America." We know little of them, for they are considered as clandestine lodges by the North American lodges, and all intercourse with them is interdicted. It is not known, how they originated; the "African Lodge" of Boston, perhaps their first nucleus, asserts that it holds a charter from the Gr. Lodge of England; but this is still discredited. Unprejudiced German brethren. who have visited such a negro

lodge in New York, met with nothing which prevented their considering it as perfectly regular. But in North America, the land of boasted liberty, it is well known that every negro, mulatto, mestee, every person with but a drop of colored blood in his veins, even though he be the most righteous, the most educated man, gifted with talents and distinguished by knowledge, is considered as an outcast, whose touch defiles, and with whom all intercourse must be avoided. The prejudice against colored persons is so great, that even in the non-slaveholding states which contain none but free negroes, f. i. in New York, no white man would sit down to a meal or ride in the same coach with a colored person, and it is sad but true that our American brethren have not emancipated themselves from this prejudice. In the transactions of the Gr. Lodge of New York (Willard's party) of the year 1855, the question on the admissibility of colored persons is even called "a monstrosity to be excluded from discussion" (Minutes of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg No. 51 p. 4). In the masonic congress of Paris, 1855, the delegate from Washington, Br. Cummings even made the motion, which, however, was rejected, that European lodges, in consideration of North American affairs, should abstain from admitting colored persons! It cannot, therefore, admit of a doubt, that whilst such prejudices exist, American Gr. Lodges cannot be expected to recognize lodges and grand lodges of colored persons. But are European Gr. Lodges, in which such a prejudice is unknown, thereby bound, also to refuse to recognize a great number of lodges, which perhaps otherwise fulfill all conditions of regular lodges, and to refuse admission to members of the same, merely because their complexion is somewhat darker? That this prejudice does not determine the action of European Gr. Lodges, is evident from the recognition, by most of them, of a Grand Lodge of a negro state, the Gr. Lodge of Haiti, and of her daughters, the majority of whose members are colored; it is especially mentioned in the lists of the Prussian Gr. Lodges as a "recognized" Gr. L., and at the congress of Paris its representative claimed and was not refused a seat.

The Gr. Lodge of another Negro State, the Republic of Liberia, is still too young and too little known, but in time may probably also count on being recognized by the European Gr. Lodges, as well as that of Haiti. With regard to the colored lodges and Gr. Lodges in the North American states, the North American Gr. Lodges might, to be sure, rely on the monopoly claimed by them, according to which there can be but one Gr. Lodge in every state, all lodges not subordinate to the same being considered clandestine, a monopoly which they have created for themselves, by mutual consent, and which has not been established, as f. i. in Prussia, by the demand of the government of the state. It is possible that the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, which, on account of disregarding this monopoly as regards German lodges in North America, has come into collision with the North American Gr. Lodges, may be denied the right to expatiate on its general validity. But she believes that she may, with propriety, point to the fact, that in this special case, the question is about lodges, which, if they wished to join the Gr. Lodges of the state, would undoubtedly be repelled, and which are composed of men whose right of admission is denied by the standard Gr. Lodges, from a prejudice

which cannot be approved from a masonic point of view, and that the monopoly insisted on, with its inherent consequences, can hardly in fairness be applied with respect to such lodges. If American Lodges in view of the prejudice there prevailing, receive no colored persons, if they refuse to admit them as visitors and forbid their own brethren to visit them, they may be politically, if not masonically, right. But they cannot demand that European lodges should adopt their views of practice concerning colored persons and f. i. refuse to initiate a negro or mulatto who otherwise fulfills all conditions appertaining to a true freemason, merely because he is colored, or deny the right to visit to a colored brother, merely because he is denied access to the American lodges. It is possible that an early day every lodge may find itself under the necessity of deciding this question practically, as the intercourse of Europe with other parts of the globe is annually increasing; especially lodges of seaport towns, and in Germany perhaps soonest those of Hamburg. The Gr. Lodge of Hamburg has been impelled by this possibility to broach the question, and to introduce it for discussion and settlement at one of her next meetings. She is desirous of the support of the opinions of her beloved sisters, if possible concurring, and therefore requests them to advise her, at their earliest convenience, of their views and intentions, as well with regard to the recognition of the "Gr. Lodge of the Republic of Liberia on the West Coast of Africa," as, especially, of the Lodges and Gr. Lodges of colored persons existing in North America, and considered as clandestine by the North American Gr. Lodges.

Hamburg, May 1858.

For the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg,

(Signed) Dr. BUEK Sen., Gr. M.

(Signed) R. L. TITZCK, Gr. Sec'y.

VI.

Extract from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Master Masons of Pythagoras Lodge No. 1 of July 7, 1858.

To the W. Gr. Lodge of Hamburg.

Beloved Brethren:

The circular of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg of May 1858, concerning the relation of colored lodges (lodges of negroes, mulattoes, &c.) to the other lodges of the globe, has been discussed at an extraordinary meeting of the master masons of Pythagoras Lodge No. 1 on the 7th of July, and after mature reflection this lodge transmits in the following remarks its views on the subject in question:

The essential points concerning the origin and later condition of colored lodges in the United States have already been communicated in an article in No. 29 of the "Leipzic Masonic Gazette" for 1855; we add thereto three documents which appear to prove, that the "African Lodge" of Boston really has obtained a charter from the Gr. Lodge of England in 1784, at a time therefore, when there existed two Gr.

Lodges in Massachusetts, viz: St. John's Gr. Lodge, and Ancient Gr. Lodge, and when the latter had already declared itself an independent masonic tribunal (1777).

The question whether we would initiate, or admit as visitors, colored persons in our own lodge has been at least partially answered by the previous history of our lodge. Upon several occasions, colored brethren, who were even members of a daughter of the Gr. Lodge of New York, have been present at the work of our lodge, always meeting with a truly brotherly reception; the respect of the brethren for one of them has even been expressed, after his death, in open lodge, by the grand honours (June 4th 1847).

We deem it advisable to consider the question, at present, not as one of principle but merely as a practical one, and to declare briefly and distinctly:

"that we cheerfully admit, at the meetings of our lodge, every colored person, who is a member of a regular lodge, but that we will not, at present, initiate any colored person in our lodge, from reasons which are based upon the outward circumstances of our lodge."

We can, moreover, not refrain from calling attention to the necessity of a still more careful scrutiny than usual, when the question is about the initiation of colored persons, owing to their political and social position, and the degree of culture of the great majority of colored persons in America and other parts of the globe.

With brotherly affection and respect

(Signed) H. A. SCHLEICHER, W. M.
(Signed) F. SCHUMACHER, Sec'y.

Brooklyn, July 8th, 1858.

V.

Letter from Bro. R. Barthelmess, W. M. of Pythagoras Lodge No. 1 Brooklyn, to the Representative of the Gr. L. of New York with the Gr. L. of Saxony, Bro. Fred. Aug. von Mensch.

Respected Brother!

The Report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Gr. L. of the State of N. Y. contains, on pp. 123 to 136, a section, entitled "Hamburg" in which is recorded a number of opinions and motions concerning the transactions in the G. L. of Hamburg with regard to the position of the colored lodges, so called, and brethren in the United States. It appears from the same Report, that you, as the Representative of the Gr. L. of the St. of N. Y. with the Gr. L. of Saxony, have been prominent in furnishing the material or pretext for these motions &c., by your Report to the latter and your Correspondence with the former body. The spirit of the Committee's Report, the variety of errors into which they as well as you have fallen, and the fact, that my name has found repeated mention in these documents, in a manner anything but flattering to myself, have determined me to address you directly. Let me hope that this letter will prevent any future recurrence of errors and misunderstandings, similar to those which I am now considering.

To begin then, it cannot have escaped your notice, that for years, i. e. since the beginning of the Correspondence of the Gr. L. of Hamburg with that of New-York, on the subject of the charter of Pythagoras Lodge, there has been an essential difference between the letters, complaints, decrees &c., emanating from one and the other of the Gr. Lodges, concerning the matter in dispute between them. All the resolutions and opinions of the German Gr. L. and of its distinguished presiding officer Br. Dr. Buek are characterized by a calm dignity and a fraternal spirit; whilst those of the American Gr. L. frequently indulge in angry, violent, and inconsiderate invectives, when meeting views at variance with their own. If, in addition, you compare the passages in the minutes of the Gr. L. of Hamburg which record the manner of its opposition to the views of other G. Lodges (f. i. that of Berlin) concerning the vocation of masonry, with the paper feuds between Willard's & Philipp's Gr. Lodges of the State of N. Y., you will find additional proof for the judgment I have here expressed. The Report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, above alluded to, furnishes another example of the fact that American brethren are more easily led to a violation of the limits of propriety and brotherly love, than such is apt to be the case with the lodges of our own Germany.

The Report opens by saying that Hamburg "conscious of the great wrong committed by her in granting charters to two lodges in New York, had commenced a system of reprisals hitherto unheard of in the history of masonry". I might with propriety leave Hamburg to defend itself against the insinuation of a bad conscience; but I am impelled at least to declare to you (and my information from Hamburg on the subject is very precise), that the Gr. L. of that city has not the least idea of regretting its act, being fully convinced of its rights in the premises. Its reasons have been communicated in detail to the Gr. L. of this State by the Gr. L. of Hamburg itself. (Transactions of the Gr. L. of N. Y. [Willard's party] 1850/51 pp. 71—77, and 1851/52 pp. 141—151). But on what, allow me to ask, is founded the intention or the justification of the Gr. Lodges of the U. S. claiming masonic jurisdiction over the political area of every individual state for their respective bodies, of claming the states, as it were, as their territorial possessions, as the dominions of their sway? Certainly not on the past history of the masonic fraternity in general. You know as well as I do that, when the Gr. Lodge of England was formed, in 1717, the same England still contained the ancient lodge of York under the style of "Gr. Lodge of All England" (toitus Angliae) and that the Gr. Master of the former, Count Crawford (1734) did not hesitate to institute lodges in the district of the latter, and to appoint Provincial Gr. Masters of Lancashire, Durham and Northumberland. The same was done in 1738, by the Gr. Master, Marquis of Canarvon. From 1772 to 1813 two Gr. Lodges existed in England, those of the Ancient and of the Modern Masons; and if the Gr. Lodge of York had not yet expired, even three. The Grand Lodges of the Ancient and of the Modern Masons, as well as those of Scotland and Ireland, instituted subordinate lodges, under Special Provincial Gr. Masters, in the same British colonies. When, therefore,

the independence of some of these had been established, there was not, immediately, one only independent Gr. Lodge in every state. For about 40 years (until 1792) there were two Gr. Lodges in the State of Massachusetts, the one tracing its descent from the Gr. Lodge of England, the other from that of Scotland. In South Carolina there were two Gr. Lodges from 1787 to 1808, which were then consolidated, but again separated in 1809, and so remained until 1817. In the State of New York we see, from 1823 until 1827, from 1837 until 1850, and from 1849 until 1858, several Gr. Lodges co-extant, viz: Willard's, Philipp's, the St. John's, and the Gr. Lodge of Colored Masons. Besides the authorities of the St. John's degrees, there exist moreover, and especially in the United States, Grand Chapter, Gr. Encampments, Grand Councils and other strange issues of human fancy, which would, at one time, alienate the Royal Arch Degrees from the juridiction of the original organizations, at another, arrogate to themselves jurisdiction over the Blue Degrees, and again dissolve the latter into kindred higher degrees. In the same manner, the most variegated formations of masonic governments in France have, for more than a century, resisted and defied all conciliatory efforts, both violent and peaceful. Even Germany presents interesting supplements to this array of facts. In Prussia, there are three Gr. Lodges, which, it is true, do not permit any other Gr. Lodges to establish subordinate lodges in the Prussian dominions, but which nevertheless themselves do so at the seat of other Gr. Lodges, f. i. in Hamburg. England has, even to this day, a subordinate lodge in Frankfort o. M. In the same city, only a few years ago, a subordinate of the Gr. Orient of France has attached itself to the Gr. L. of Hamburg. In Hamburg, are found subordinates of Hamburg, Frankfort, and Berlin; in Rostock, Provincial Gr. Lodges of Berlin and of Hamburg; in Frankfort, subordinates of Frankfort, Darmstadt, and of England; in Hesse-Darmstadt, of Darmstadt and of Frankfort; in Baden, Wirtemberg, and Bavaria, lodges work, as subordinates of Hamburg, Frankfort and Bayreuth, in perfect peace and harmony, emulating and fostering one anotner.

The districtial limitation of this jurisdiction of individual Grand Lodges being, therefore, by no means founded on any ancient fundamental law of the masonic fraternity, can, nevertheless, I readily grant, be determined upon, by mutual agreement between two or more Grand Lodges. This has been done by the Gr. Lodges of the U. S. among themselves. But it is arrogance on their part, to deny the right of a Gr. Lodge, not a party to the compact, to establish subordinate lodges in any country. The area of a state is not, and cannot be, the property of a Gr. Lodge, inaccessible and unapproachable to other supreme masonic authorities, which refuse to recognize such a restriction. Even in admitting the right of an American Gr. Lodge to advocate a principle, which it regards as wholesome, we are compelled to allow another Gr. Lodge to act in accordance with its own convictions. The Gr. L. of N. Y., in particular, has long shown a disposition to force its views upon its sister Gr. Lodges, as gospel, and hence even dares to apply the term of crime to the action of Hamburg. The absurdity would be complete, if the word crime had been followed by laesae majestatis (high-treason).

But who has, I further ask, conceded to the Gr. Lodge, originating, decades past, from a small number (3, 5, &c.) of lodges, the competence

of demanding of all brethren, settling in the state at a latter date, subordination to their particular dominion? It may be, that the few lodges constituting the Gr. Lodges have since grown into a great number, perhaps 400, as in the State of New York, which have all found it convenient to accede to the territorial Gr. Lodge. But it is impossible, that such a Grand Lodge should exercise authority beyond the circle of brethren, already connected therewith. If I, or others, take exceptions to the laws in actual force, to the ritual, to the organization, or the administration of the Gr. Lodge, already existing in the state, by that title can the latter compel me, the freeman, made mason in a regular lodge, to act contrary to my inclination, to my wants and to my convictions? Whence does the Gr. Lodge of New York derive authority to compel the adoption of a uniform, agreeable to the majority, by brethren, who, as is the case with members of Pythagoras Lodge, from masonic education and experience in the old country, or from the general education which they have enjoyed, entertain more elevated views of lodge-life than are generally current here? Who has conceded to it the right to force these men, who moreover, in part are not, as you suppose, American citizens, into conditions abhorrent and perhaps repulsive to their own feelings?

The consequence of these unfortunate efforts, to compel uniformity of conflicting opinions, has been, on the one hand, this, that brethren have, in troops, succumbed to the allurements of the systems of higher degrees, and on the other hand, that in every state thousands of brethren, finding the Gr. L. straight jacket too restrictive, belong to no lodge whatever and have thus been entirely lost to the fraternity. Even in Prussia, the brethren have at least their free choice among the legal and ritualistic tenets of three Grand Lodges; in almost every other state of Germany, they can choose among a still larger number.

The Committee, as has been before stated, speaks of reprisals emanating from Hamburg. I request you, my respected brother, and shall address a similar request to the committee, to adduce a single measure of Hamburg's, as proof of the assertion. Verily, if the demeanor of the latter Gr. Lodge be examined in detail, if it be considered, that, when Pythagoras Lodge had been declared clandestine by the Gr. L. of N. Y. and all intercourse with Hamburg had been broken off, the latter, without the least show of irritation, answered these unfraternal measures by requesting its American chartered lodges to receive every mason in the State of New York as a brother, and to assist him in every way;— then, indeed, does the assertion of the committee appear as so glaring a deviation from the facts, that an honorable motive for the same cannot be supposed.

Or can, perhaps, the circular of the Gr. L. of Hamburg of May 1858, concerning colored brethren and their lodges, be considered as a reprisal? The minutes of the Gr. Lodge of Feb. 27. 58 (No. VII p. 2) make particular mention of facts, which, probably from oversight, have found no place in your letter to New York or in the Report of the Committee, viz: that the Gr. Master, Br. Buek, had received, from the Rev. Br. Klug in Lübeck, extracts from a letter (of Sept. 25, 1857) of a young man, who had been made a mason in a lodge in Monrovia (Liberia) and who communicated facts concerning masonic life there.

It was further stated, that the Gr. Master of Restoration Gr. Lodge, Republic of Liberia, was at the time making a voyage to Europe with a view to establish correspondences in England and France. Also, that the letter expressed the desire of entering into communication with German lodges, and that the Rev. Br. Klug had addressed him, concerning the latter point. The Gr. Master, Br. Buek, states expressly, that the letter threw no light upon the origin of the lodge, that it appeared doubtful, whether it could be considered as a lawfully organized, just and perfect (regular) lodge, and that he had therefore applied for information to Br. Cohn, Representative of Hamburg with the Gr. L. of England. He had, in answer, been informed, that the Gr. L. of England had no cognizance of the Gr. L. in Liberia. "As long as the lodge could give no satisfactory account of itself," say the minutes of Hamburg, "or prove, that it had been chartered by a lawful Gr. L., it would have to be considered as a clandestine lodge, with which no correspondence could be established. The Restoration Gr. L. of Liberia, founded on a single lodge, not properly accounted for, had no claim to the name of Gr. L., or even Prov.Gr. Lodge. As soon as these conditions were fulfilled, the Gr. L. of Hamburg would gladly enter into friendly relations with it."

The minutes of the Gr. L. of Hamburg of May 6, 1858 (§ IV p. 2) communicate the fact, that Br. Gödelt, a member of the lodge of Monrovia, now a resident of Hamburg, had stated to the Gr. Master that the lodge of Monrovia had probably been chartered by a North American Gr. Lodge, perhaps that of Massachusetts. The Gr. Master supposing, that the Negro Gr. Lodge of Massachusetts was the one alluded to, a question would arise which had not as yet been discussed in Hamburg, viz: whether the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg recognized the Lodges and Grand Lodges of colored masons existing in north America.

In consequence of these o currences and uncertainties, the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg issued her circular of Mav 1858, which is reproduced, not with entire correctness, on p. 124 of the Report of the Committee, with the view, as is stated in the first lines, "of preferring the request to the Grand Lodges, with which it entertained intimate relations, to have the kindness to consider the question, and to enable it, by kindly communicating their views, to propose measures concerning the same, which would be likely to obtain the approbation and assent of all, or at all events of the majority of the beloved sisters."

The fact, then, that Hamburg has undertaken to inquire into a subject, brought before it by members of the lodge in Liberia, and to ask advice on this question which immediately concerns itself and the brethren named, is the inducement to the Committee to make an onslaught on the German Gr. L., in the usual wanton style, and to stigmatize its circular as a reprisal. Some opinions of yours, by no means calculated to moderate the prejudice obtaining here against Hamburg, sustain the Committee in their course.

Precisely the same motive, which determined Hamburg to raise the question on the origin of Negro Lodges, has, several decades ago, induced a number of Gr. Lodges in the United States, that of N. Y. among others, to refer the same inquiry to committees. You will find this subject treated by me in an article, entitled "Lodges of the

Colored," in No. 29 of the "Leipzic Masonic Gazette" for 1855. In the "Transactions of the Gr. L. of N. Y." 1844/45 p. 54 and 1845/46 pp. 20—22, and in the "Freemason's Monthly Magazine" Vol VI. (1846/47) pp. 139—141, it is expressly stated, that the Gr. Secretary, Br. Herring, had made a report, on the 2d of June 1846, in consequence of the application of the colored members of Boyer Lodge, for recognition. Discussions on the same subject have also taken place as early as the 3d. of March 1812, and 4th of March 1829. And now, the same New York stigmatizes an action, previously entertained by itself, as a crime, as a revengeful, unmasonic demeanor, merely because it is Hamburg, whence it, more recently, emanates.

On p. 135 on their Report, the Committee have propounded a series of questions, f. i.:

"In the first place, has the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg ever been appealed to by these negro lodges to recognize them? What business has that body to be meddling with this matter? more than 3000 miles away:—None whatever. Do they know of the rejection of a colored individual by one of our lodges? Do they know, or have they been informed of the exclusion of a single member of a "colored lodge" from the doors of a white man's lodge? Has it been intimated to Hamburg that all intercourse with colored mason has been forbidden?"

These questions have, in part, already been answered by the minutes of Febr. and May 1858, above cited. It has been shown that Hamburg has, by the direct appeal to member of "colored lodges," so called, been brought under the necessity of instituting inquiries concerning them. Hamburg is also aware, partly from the article in the "Freemasons Gazette", above mentioned, and in part from other communications, that the Gr. Lodge of Illinois, when, in 1845, one of its subordinate lodges had admitted a freeborn mulatto, in the following year resolved to interdict the admission of negroes and mulattoes by its subordinate lodges; that the Gr. Master of Texas (1852), in the opening address to the Gr. Lodge, declared, that the Gr. Lodges of all the Slave States earnestly protested against the admission of colored persons, and insisted on the revocation of charters, where such had been granted by England. Hamburg knows that, in consequence of an application for initiation by a colored man which had been introduced in a subordinate lodge, and seconded by two brethren, but rejected by the lodge, the Committee of Foreign Correspondence of the Gr. Lodge of New York have declared themselves emphatically averse to the initiation of colored persons (1851 and 1852/53); that the Gr. Lodge of Ohio (1852/53) has exhorted all brethren to avoid all intercourse with negro lodges. Hamburg has knowledge of the fact that, in 1851, an application from free negroes of the Republic of Liberia for a charter for a lodge to be organized in the town of Monrovia, has been rejected, without the adducement of any reason, by the Gr. Lodge of the District of Columbia; that an address to Gr. Lodge of New York, made in 1851, in imitation of earlier efforts, by the "United Gr. Lodge (Colored Masons)," organized in 1848, has remained entirely without notice from the former body; that Br. Cummings, Representative of the Gr. Lodge of the District of Columbia at the Masonic Congress of Paris (1855) made a motion, which was, to be sure, rejected by the congress, that the Gr. Lodges outside of the

United States should also cut off all colored persons from eligibility to the masonic fraternity. Hamburg has cognizance of the fact, that the Gr. Lodge, of the United States have made it impossible for colored people to obtain, in the United States, the sanction for the establishment of lodges, and that they, under the pretext of discountenancing infringements of territorial jurisdiction, are endeavoring to prevent other Gr. Lodges also from granting charters to such persons. Hamburg knows, that the nothern state of the Union, especially New York, have by degrees subordinated their opinions to the interest of the slaveholders, nay, have recently even favored the importation of slaves, in defiance of law and for the sake of filthy lucre, and that even within the precincts of masonry, they dare not raise the banner of liberty and of equal rights of men.

In the face of these and other facts, should not Hamburg, which has ever energetically defended the universality and the humane substructure of the masonic fraternity, have the duty to take notice of masons, with whom members of lodges, chartered by Hamburg, frequently meet in public. Although they live at a distance of 3000 miles from the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, masons, owing allegiance to that Grand Lodge, and, residing in the same city, frequently see them at public demonstrations, such as the laying of corner stones, funerals &c., clad as masons, and acting as such. Hamburg should refuse to notice "colored lodges" which count also white men among their members, lodges whose members the extensive commerce of the Hanse Town leads to that city and to the very doors of its lodges?—

That German brethren should have visited the negro lodges in New York is a terrible stumbling block to the Committee. In their customary arrogance they say:

"No German brother has ever visited these negro Lodges in New York! Such a thing cannot be done—for the moment a Mason enters the portals of such a body in New York, in the character of a mason, his panoply of a "Brother" departs from him &c."

The address of the "United Grand Lodge," of 1851, already cited, says (p. 4):

"We most respectfully appeal to you, Sir, and ask you to examine our case, and we do not fear the result, as very many of the Brethren, now belonging to your subordinate lodges, have honored our lodges with their presence, and we have always, when they could "work their way," admitted them with pleasure and masonic courtesy, and with that pleasing hospitality, that all good and true masons know so well how to use towards a Brother, whether we have had particular or private business to transact or not."

I myself know of many brethren, who, valuing their own masonic consciousness more highly than the anathemas of Grand Lodges, have visited the colored masons in their working lodges. I am one of them myself. I entered a "colored lodge" for the first time in New York on the 9th of December 1852. I was then a member of the lodge of "The Three Arrows" (in Nuremberg) in which I had never heard of an interdict of visits to negroes, but had been taught that the masonic fraternity knew of no difference of rank, faith, political views, or color. I knew of no law of any Gr. Lodge to prevent me from visiting

the lodge, and I was conducted to it by the former W. M. of our lodge, Br. C. F. Bauer, who, it is true, lacked the courage to assist at the work himself. You can read my experience of that visit in No. 29 of the "Leipsic Masonic Gazette" for 1855. I was led to that visit by my enthusiasm for the exalted aims of the masonic fraternity, by my thirst for knowledge, and by my desire to alleviate, by my appearance and sympathy, the lot of the poor outcasts, who, without fault of theirs, were despised and shunned by great numbers of men. I met with a truly fraternal and courteous reception. I was told, on inquiry, that the lodge held a genuine charter from Boston (England). It is not of the slightest consequence whether the Committee of the N. Y. Gr. Lodge, on account of that visit, considers me as a "Brother" or not. I am even fully convinced that a condemnatory judgment of the Gr. Lodge itself, on that account, could not possibly detract from my worth as a mason or as a man. We have, happily, outlived the times, when imagination could admit the possibility that, at the moment of my crossing the threshold of that negro lodge, my quality of "brother" should have departed from me, as if by witchcraft. If the Committee absolutely insist upon so believing, they may enjoy full liberty of making themselves ridiculous in the eyes of all sensible men.

At a later date, as a member of Pythagoras Lodge No. 1, I have visited the Negro Grand Lodge of New York, in company with Br. Bergstein, then W. M. of Franklin Lodge No. 2., and I have since had frequent intercourse with its then Gr. Master, an honorable man, of Indian descent, and an industrious mechanic, a tinsmith by trade. At that visit, also, had I occasion to acknowledge the urbanity and the modesty of the colored brethren.

But colored brethren have also been admitted in Pythagoras Lodge, when it bore the number 86 and was a subordinate of the Gr. Lodge of New York. The minutes of the meeting of the 15th of January 1847, (the W. M. Br. Bohne presiding, and Br. C. F. Bauer who does not blush to sign the Report of the Committee, being present) proves the presence, among the visitors, of the colored brother and clergyman Wright, Member of St. George Lodge No. 6 in Schenectady, a subordinate of the white men's Gr. Lodge of the State of New York. At the meeting of the 4th of June 1847, the same Br. C. F. Bauer who has signed the Report of the Committee, announced, as presiding officer pro tem., to the assembled brethren, "that the Rev. Br. Richard Wright, a colored brother, who had repeatedly visited the lodge had gone to the celestial lodge above. The respect of the lodge for his memory was expressed by the grand honours." From re-iterated verbal communications of this same Br. C. F. Bauer, and of Br. Unkart, I know that the Br. Wright, here alluded to, together with his son, had, in several instances, visited Pythagoras Lodge, and that upon one occasion, at a fraternal banquet, he had his place by the side of Br. Unkart, who, in accordance with the custom, then obtaining, had bestowed the fraternal kiss upon the brother at his side; nay, that Br. Wright had been admitted at meetings of the Gr. Lodge of New York!!!

I readily admit that the colored, in general, are mentally inferior to the white, as you say in your report of 14th of October 1858. But this is not alone owing to the difference of race, but also to their edu-

cation and to the social position into which they have been forced. Numbers of colored children are, by the acts of the white, totally deprived of the possibility of acquiring a good school education. They grow up, shunned and despised, nay under the lash of the overseer, with the conviction, that, distinguish themselves as they may, it will, nevertheless, not be in their power to throw off the curse inflicted upon them by the white; or, they are utterly incapacitated from rising to the consciousness of more than low and sensual wants. They find themselves reduced, by state and social institutions, to a limited circle of inferior occupations. What wonder, then, that but very few of the colored race rise to the sphere of free and independent thought, to a degree of education which could command respect, or to an adequate development of the faculties which equally belong to their nature? Why should not the principle that society itself is to blame for the deficient mental and moral culture of part of its members, which has been largely admitted in jurisprudence and in education, in a measure also apply to the members of the Ethiopian race? Your quotation, from André's articles in a Leipsic paper, is opposed by the acounts of several travellers concerning various tribes of Central Africa, which they have found possessed of good mental faculties as well as of an excellent physical development. It is above all opposed by the admirable passages of our great Alexander von Humboldt on the exceeding wrong of slavery. But be that as it may, it cannot be denied that, in many instances, honorable and intelligent men are found among the colored people, men of higher culture than many sons of Ireland, emigrants to this country, whom the yoke of a catholic priesthood has all but despoiled of every vestige of human dignity; and equally superior to many white brother masons. Your assertion, in one of your reports, that free colored people enjoy no political or civil rights or privileges in any of the free states of the Union, arises from a deficient knowledge of their institutions, for colored citizens have the right of suffrage in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and Rhode Island; also in the State of New York, with the proviso that they must be freeholders to the amount of $250.—The pretext, therefore, that the political and social positions of the colored people precluded their initiation into the masonic fraternity, has no foundation in these states.

But independently of this circumstance, you know, as well as I do, that the ancient charges demand of a candidate for initiation only that he be a "free man of good repute," and make not the least mention of a difference of color to be recognized by the masonic fraternity. This principle has ever been acted upon by the Grand Lodge of England, the mother of all other lodges, and has been gloriously vindicated in its most recent opinion on this very question. Will you, my brother, lend yourself to the cause of the illiberal, unmasonic pretensions of American brethren, as against the lofty principles of our fraternity?

In 1855 I wrote thus in the "Leipsic Masonic Gazette", and I still so insist: "If a colored person be sufficiently educated to be fitted for the proper comprehension and practice of masonic rites; if he hold a social position which allows him to devote part of his time to the ends of the fraternity and shields him from oppressive care for his

daily sustenance; if he be of good repute and "free born," he should he as welcome in a lodge as any white man."

That this assertion is by no means as adventurous as you and the Gr. Lodge Committee, in their deferences to southern interests, would fain make it appear, is proved, not only by the instance of St. George Lodge No. 6 of Schenectady, already alluded to, but also by several other facts and manifestations in the higher masonic tribunals of the country:

Thus a Boston print (Daily Atlas June 18. 1850) reports that, on the 75th anniversay of the battle of Bunker Hill, the procession was joined, besides by the white masons, also by the Prince Hall Gr. Lodge of colored masons in full regalia the same which is so violently assailed by the New York committee; also by a lodge of colored Odd-Fellows, and by a white and colored division of the Sons of Temperance.

The Grand Lodge of Connecticut (Abstr. of the Transactions of the Grand Lodge of New York [Philipps party] 1853/54 p. 28) has emphatically disapproved of the refusal of the Gr. Lodge of the District of Columbia to grant a charter to the negroes of the Republic of Liberia.

The Grand Lodge of New Hampshire (Transactions of the Gr. Lodge of New York 1852/53 p. 149) has, in 1852, pronounced adversly upon the rigorous resolutions of the Gr. Lodge of Illionis, heretofore cited.

Massachusetts, also, has declared (Transactions of the Gr. Lodge of N. Y. 1845/46 p. 22; Freemason's Monthly Mag. 1846/47 Vol. IV. p. 140) that the treatment of the question by the Gr. Lodge of Mass. was not the result of prejudice, in proof whereof a colored brother from England had recently been cordially received in a lodge of Boston.

Members of eleven German lodges of New York, at a meeting held Oct. 23. 1853, with a view to form a German Gr. Lodge, have pronounced in favor of the admission of colored brethren belonging to regular lodges.

Br. Dove even, Representative of the Gr. Lodge of Virginia at the masonic congress of Paris, 1855, could not escape the necessity of sitting in council with the colored representative of the Gr. Lodge of Haiti.

In this you are right, my brother, that part of the nothern states are afraid to provoke the ill-will of the slave states by even the semblance of favor towards colored persons. The American lodges, in recoiling from the consistent advocacy of the universality of masonry, and especially the Gr. L. of N. Y., which some 15 years ago energetically defended the initiation of Jews against the proscriptive tendencies of the Prussian Gr. Lodges, and now adnegate the principle, degrade the masonic fraternity into an instrument of southern slaveholders. Even at the risk of a split between the Southern and Northern Gr. Lodges, the latter ought, if they have the realization of the lofty ideas of the fraternity at heart, to advocate the equal rights of all men as regards initiation into masonry, insisting, of course, upon the special qualifications prescribed by the landmarks. A political separa-

tion, in consequence of so decided a measure, is by no means to be apprehended.—

The African Lodge of Boston has, in fact, obtained a regular charter, in 1784, from the Gr. Lodge of England. This is proved by several letters addressed by Bbr. R. Th. Crucifix and W. Jones, not to me, as you erroneously state in your report of Dec. 5th 1859, but to the Gr. M. of the colored lodges of New York as a brother. The former writes under date of Jan. 1st 1846 thus:

"The African Lodge of Boston received the warrant from the Grand Lodge of England in the year 1784 and was numbered 459 on the registry; the warrant was signed by Rowland Holt, D. G. M., and countersigned by W. White, G. S. the father of our present G. S. This I find all regularly entered in the books of our Gr. L., consequently any connection with the Gr. L. of Scotland is out of the question".

This charter was granted at a time when there were two Grand Lodges in the State of Massachusetts, and when the colored people had applied, in vain, for a charter to the Gr. Lodge of Massachusetts, like those of Liberia recently (1851). Even you admit in your report, of April 6. 1859, that a warrant was regularly issued to the colored people of Boston, but then add, on the strength of an assertion of the Gr. L. of New York, as yet utterly unsustained by proof, that the same had been surreptitiously obtained by a sea captain. What do you mean by that? May be that the charter, as is there stated, was forfeited by the interruption of reports to the Gr. Lodge, and that, in consequence, the lodge, holding it, was stricken from the list. But, if the charter was granted only in 1784, it is impossible that it was declared void more than a century ago, as you state in one of your reports. ("The registration of this daughter Lodge was stricken from the rolls of the mother lodge more than a century ago" Rep. of the Comm, p. 133). Neither has it been only 8 to 10 years ago that the African Lodge has again used that warrant. For as early as 1827, the "Prince Hall G. L. of free and accepted (colored) masons" was formed in Boston, and in 1812, already, has the N. Y. Gr. L. discussed the question of regularity as to Boyer Lodge, chartered by the African Lodge.

You attempt to deny the authority of the St. John's Lodge of Boston to constitute itself into a grand lodge, without the consent of the mother lodge, and to issue warrants. Aside from the fact, that the organization of Grand Lodges for the supervision of masons is of comparatively recent date (1717), it must be recollected, that the Provincial Lodges and subordinate lodges of the Grand Lodge of England, in the North American colonies, have, after the war of independence, themselves not asked the consent of their Gr. Lodge to constitute Gr. Lodges. And inquire, also, into the history of the masonic fraternity in Germany! The Lodge of Unity in Frankfort, instituted by London, has, from the beginning, organized lodges on its own account, among others the lodge of Unity of Nuremberg. The brethren of Berlin formed (Sept. 13. 1740), by royal authority, and without asking a warrant from any other Gr. Lodge, the lodge "Aux trois globes," from which originated, in 1744, "the Gr. Royal Mother Lodge of the Three Globes," and from it, the Margrave of Baireuth transplanted masonry to the town of that name. The first lodge in Vienna (Aux trois Canons) likewise exercised the

function of a Gr. Lodge. The same has repeatedly been done by the lodge "of the three Keys" in Ratisbon and others.

In your own country, Saxony, the same thing has taken place. From the lodge "of the three white Eagles," founded 1738 in Dresden by Count Rutowsky, emanated in 1739 that "of the three Swords" which still exists, and in 1741 that "of the three Swans". These two united in one Gr. Lodge, whose Gr. M. Count Rutowsky independently instituted several daughter lodges.

The lodge "Minerva" also, chartered by the Gr. Lodge of London, in 1741, has in its turn instituted lodges, whilst still other lodges of Saxony were called into existence by the Mother lodge of the Three Globes. All these lodges, originating in the manner indicated, were and those, which yet exist, are still recognized as regular lodges. Your own lodge, to which you at present belong, has perhaps originated by this very procedure, which you pronounce illegal and exceptionable, in which case you would, logically, have to declare yourself an irregular mason.*)

The Committee of the Gr. Lodge of N. Y. regard me as the principal instigator of all the mischief arising between the latter and Hamburg, and hence heap upon me reproaches and insinuations, in their usual style, appealing to a letter from you (Rep. of Comm. p. 135). To your honor I will believe, that you have not yourself written the words used by the committee "that a certain Mr. Barthelmess of Brooklyn acts as the reporter and spy of the Gr. L. of Hamburg; that he visits our Lodges and reports everything which can be distorted or made to appear odious abroad. If this man is a Mason in regular standing, he should be tried, and, if guilty, expelled. If he is a clandestine or irregular man, the Lodges which admit him should have their charters withdrawn" (p. 135), for, in another letter; you call me a respectable brother. You know that I have received the masonic light (1845) in the lodge "of the three Arrows" in Nuremberg, one of the best and most respected lodges of Germany. I have there zealously grasped the task imposed upon me, and have filled several offices, among others those of Secretary and of Senior Warden, until I, of my own free will, came to America. Here, before being affiliated in Pythagoras Lodge, I have visited a number of American and German lodges, in order to gain a clear insight into the condition of the field, upon which I intended to become active as a mason. You have yourself formerly been a member of a New York lodge and must, therefore, be as familiar with the condition of things in this place as myself. Hand on your heart, my brother! must you not admit, that among the masons of Germany, the conception and practise of masonic rituals and doctrines is of a more elevated character than that which obtains here, in harmony with the more perfect mental development of the German people? It is true, I had become accustomed in the lodge of the three Arrows to Schröder's ritual; but, by frequent visits in the second lodge of Nuremberg "Joseph of Unity" and in those of Fürth, Erlangen and Coburg, I had became equally familiar with the usages of the Eclectic League and of the Gr. Lodge Royal York of Friendship. I

*) Bro. von Mensch is a member of the Lodge of the three Swords and Astraea of the Verdant Rue of Dresden.

came to America with no prejudices concerning any particular system, but with the settled determination to join no lodge whose constitution, composition, and care of the masonic symbols should not offer me security against the predicament of sacrificing, by a connection with it, the finer feelings of a man of liberal mind and education. There can be no question of a prejudice on my part against the "Ancient York Rite," for the simple reason that such a rite has no existence at all in these United States. A prominent American brother (Pierson) says, in the American Quaterly Review Vol. II. p. 544: "We frequently hear the term ""York Rite"" used; but nowhere on earth is the pure York Rite now in use. In common with some other matters—owing to the vanity, negligence and stupidity of men—it has been lost". All those who have taken the trouble to study the origin and development of this rite, concur in this opinion. No American brother knows what the term "Ancient York Rite" means. If you could enlighten me on the subject, I should feel under great obligations to you. But if you should be disposed to apply the term to a rite in general use in the United States, I can inform you, and perhaps thereby astonish you, that usages compiled by Bbr. Webb, Cross and others, in the latter part of the last, or the beginning of the present century, from the Ancient Masons, and the Scotch Rites, have, under the continued influence of English and French patterns, led to such a confusion, that a congruity of forms exists in no city and in no state of the Union."

In all the lodges of New York which I have visited, I have observed, to use a mild phrase, such a lack of comprehension of the mission of masonry, that I have witnessed the meetings with astonishment and turned away from them in sadness and utter disappointment, Pythagoras Lodge was then, among all those with which I became acquainted, the only one which seemed to me to have entered upon the path of sensible progress. What it then (1852) was, and now is, it owes solely to its affiliation to Hamburg. Besides myself, many of the German brethren who had emigrated from their native land, where they had enjoyed a sound masonic schooling, would not have joined it, had it not, as the daughter of Hamburg, had a simple ritual, and evinced a progressive tendency in the sphere of development. Pythagoras Lodge knows this and is deeply impressed therewith; it has therefore never for a moment entertained the idea of seeking a release from the alliance with Hamburg. How, then, can you make the following singular remark in your report of Jan. 5th 1859 (Rep. of the Comm. p. 134). "I say that even the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, probably from the motive of ill-understood constancy only, denies to her two daughter Lodges in New York the liberty of joining the legal Gr. Lodge of that State", and in your report of Oct. 14th 1858 this other remark: "It (the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg) and her daughter lodges bear already the deplorable consequences of its discord with the American Lodges." You must have been scandalously deceived by somebody, or have created in your mind a phantom, which has no foundation on a shadow of reality. If by "deplorable consequences" you understand the breaking off of the intercourse between the American Grand Lodges and Grand Lodge of Hamburg, I can confidentially inform you, that a number of such American brethren, as, by their education, are desirable visitors of our lodge, have no scruples

whatever to disregard the prohibition of the Gr. Lodges, and do attend our meetings. On the other hand, it is quite a source of congratulation that we are not molested by the motely crowd of masons, who, without severe scrutiny, are made members of the numerous lodges organizing everywhere.

The words in your report of Jan. 5th 1859, that the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, "incited by false and instigating reports," had violated the local jurisdiction obtaining in America, have reference to a time when I was not a member of Pythagoras Lodge, and when Br. C. F. Bauer, the same who now embodies these words in the report of the committee of the Gr. Lodge of New York and signs his name to it, carried on a lively correspondence with Hamburg, both private and by order of the lodge. I may, therefore, leave to him his own defence against your assertion.

I will mention a few of the reasons which keep us from joining the Gr. Lodge of the State of New York. It is well known that, until June 1858, it was split into several parties which carried on the most disgusting intenecine struggles, lawsuits &c. A prominent reason, however, is the predominant deference to the form. ("They stick predominantly to the form in masonry"). This is offensive to a quiet, thoughtful brother. This reproach is based upon judgments without number, from the mouth or pens of American brethren, and upon numerous observations of my own. Not in a single instance, have I seen anything else done, at the meeting of a lodge, than the ceremonies of initiation, or advancement, according to the ritual, the rattling off of the lectures, committed to memory, the transaction of financial business, the reception of reports of the sick, or the examination of officers. Several Gr. Lodges have, even at different times, prohibited the delivery of discourses in the subordinate lodges, except by special permission! And how is the ritual ordinarily managed! As it is strictly forbidden to commit it to writing, it is stowed into the memory of such as are capable of the task, and generally repeated with rapidity, and without any emotional expression whatever. The Grand Lectures, so called, consist in nothing, but the recital and rehearsal of forms, with which eye and ear have become familiar, by a thousand repetitions. This being so, it becomes necessary to be guided, in the selection of masters, principally by the capacity of a man to commit to memory the voluminous ritual. It is therefore not of unfrequent occurrence that the consideration of intellectual capacity is secondary. With the view of correcting an evil, long complained of in the Gr. Lodge; viz: that of want of uniformity in the work, most of them have appointed, what is termed, Gr. Lecturers, officers who involve a considerable expenditure, without fulfilling the purpose, for which they are created. The ritual is a motley mixture of scriptural texts, moral sentences, prayers, legends without any historical basis, and childish definitions, which are often at variance with the culture of the present time and with the aesthetic sense of educated men, lacking unity of argument. The ritual of the master's degree has been especially offensive to me in this, that the legend of Hiram's death is palmed off as historical truth, and elaborately and dramatically represented. The jumbling together of serious and ridiculous matter, of the significant and the senseless, has offended me deeply. Add to

this, that the German lodges of New York, nearly all, work by an American ritual, put into German by an unskillful hand, and you can readily imagine what a hodgepodge of half English half German words, what monstrous nonsense frequently grates upon the ear of a visiting brother.

As a former member of the Lodge of the three Arrows, and of the Masonic Historical Society (Engbund) of Nuremberg, and as a man of liberal education, I could, moreover, not help being an opponent of the higher degrees which have full swing here, embracing all that has grown up in foreign countries under the names of Royal Arch, Council of Royal and Select Masters, Knight Templars, Supreme Council Anc & Acc. Rite 33. degree, Rite of Mizriam &c, with numerous motly additions, indigenous to this country, most of the members of the Gr. Lodge belong to some or all of these systems, which thus assert a mystic influence on the fraternity at large.

Venders of tawdry regalia, book makers, itinerant lecturers, pickpockets, editors and masonic periodicals, and athers of that ilk, traverse the land, disseminating those degrees of a forged wisdom which are libels upon common sense, bestow degrees upon wives and daughters of masons,— for ready cash, of course—exactly like Johnson, Cagliostro, Schrepfer and others, in Germany and France, in days gone by. Not one of the Grand Lodges of the United States has as yet dared, energetically to stop this abuse. Nay, it is frequently carried on with the consent of Grand Officers, and even by themselves.

Do you believe it possible, that I could join in the same masonic league with men who as citizens are tailors, venders, lawyers, or what not, and who parade the streets, in broad daylight, like so many carnival buffoons, decked out as High Priests, Kings, Knight Templars &c.? Can you believe that such masquerades, demeanor which so glaringly contrasts with the culture of the age in which we live, are capable of securing, for the masonic fraternity in the United States, the esteem of well meaning men?

Again, the administration of the Gr. Lodges is by far too expensive. The Grand Lodge of New York disburses at present about Twenty Thousand Dollars annually, the greater part of which finds its way into the purses of individual Grand Officers, favored by the majority. The per diem alone, of the delegates, who are obliged to travel from all parts of the state to the seat of the only Gr. Lodge, consumes a great sum. The Gr. Secretary receives $2000—; his assistant $500; the Gr. Treasurer $75.— In consideration of his accepting a re-election, the Grand Master received, in June 1859, a present of $1500.—In June 1858, a present of $1000 was given to Gr. Secretary Herring, over and above his salary. This is nothing less than a system of barefaced robbery. Hence the frequent struggles for the remunerative offices, which will certainly be renewed, notwithstanding the much vaunted harmony which has existed during the last year. Besides the money, expended for those offices, large amounts are wasted for printing and donations. All these expenditures have to be defrayed from the dues, paid in by the subordinate lodges, many of which have to pay annual regular dues to the Grand Lodge, to the amount of $100 and upwards (one even $124), independently of the taxation for Gr. L. Certificates, Charters, Dispensations

for Extra Elections, Advancements, Funerals &c. If you take into account the expenses for the costly decorations and regalia for the higher degrees, for processions, and the like, you cannot but admit, in view of the true aim of masonry, that the pecuniary means are diverted from their original and noble object, and are wasted for the benefit of individuals, or on empty show. The State of New York in particular, with upwards of 400 subordinate lodges, has, as yet, done nothing towards the creation of any charitable institution.

In order to raise the requisite sums of money, charters are issued with a lavish hand, and the subordinate lodges, in order to bear the taxation, initiate men who should never cross the threshold of a Masonic Temple. It has happened to me, not unfrequently, in the streets of New York, to meet the most vulgar loafers, with the square and compasses as breastpins, and under circumstances, that I would have sunk into the earth for shame, had any one present known, that I also belonged to the masonic fraternity. This evil is acknowledged by most of the Gr. Lodges in the Union and great mischief is prophecied on account of this recklessness in initiations. It has, even, not been rarely seen, that officers of lodges and Gr. Lodges have absconded, or have been impeached, for embezzling sums of money, belonging to the lodges.

Pythagoras Lodge No. 1 has, by its affiliation with Hamburg, put itself beyond the danger of coming in too close contact with such men, the very dregs of the population of New York, who, in part, move in the front ranks of the masonic fraternity. The security of its position has moreover enabled it to attract the attention of its American sisters, and to sow, in different directions, the seeds of a worthy conception of the masonic obligation, by its own advantageous development, by its labors in the fields of masonic history and literature, which may be mentioned without impropriety, by its conscientious scrutiny of candidates for initiation, &c.

To what degree the defects in American masonry, alluded to, and many others, are already felt among American brethren themselves, being gradually appreciated in wider and wider circles, is proved by manifold acknowledgements in the masonic journals, as well as by the act that, in all the states, hundreds and thousands of men, and by no means inferior ones, soon after their initiation, withdraw from lodge-life and remain inactive spectators, for the remainder of their days. The masonic fraternity had offered them nothing which could have captivated them for any length of time, satisfied their craving after knowledge, or improved them morally. On the other hand, they had not failed to find an abundance of old women's stories, and vulgarities without end. As it may be of interest to you to see the judgment of one of the signers of the Report of the Committee on the condition of things in the masonic world in the State of New York, I enclose you a copy of a supplement to the Minutes of the Gr. L. of Hamburg No. 17 in which, on pages 3d and 4th, extracts from the correspondence of Br. C. F. Bauer may be found.—

After having treated the entire subject of this letter with the greatest possible equanimity, I am almost tempted to give full expression to my disgust and wrath at the passage of the Committee's Report (pp. 134 & 135) from "It may not be proper to mention" until "It is that of a savage."

But respect for my own masonic position compels me to preserve a dignified decorum, even in the face of attacks of that nature. But I cannot suppress the question as to who may be the private source, from which the committee has derived the lie "that the Gr. lodge of Hamburg had its contemplation to invite the American colored lodges, in the capacity of subordinate and Prov. Gr. Lodges, to recognize it as their mother lodge." I shall not attempt to refute that private source. The communication is so obviously ridiculous that a refutation would only be a waste of time. At the same time, it exhibits the caliber of the adversaries, with whom we have to deal. Where, I ask further, do the minutes of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg for November 1858 contain the passage, italicized on p. 134 of the Report of the Committee, saying that the Gr. Master of Hamburg had *rejoiced* at the feuds which had taken place within the Gr. Lodge of New York and furnishing the committee with an excuse for applying the epithet of a savage to Br. *Buek* who, *in every respect*, is a highly estimable man? The whole of Br. *Buek's* action, with regard to the matter was the mentioning of an article in the "*Triangle*" (Vol. IV. 12. p. 94) having reference to the occurrences at the August meeting of the Gr. L. of New York, as you may see for yourself, by refering to that No. of the Gr. L. minutes. The Triangle is a paper edited by Br. Röhr, at present W. M. of Schiller Lodge No. 304 in Williamsburg, a subordinate lodge of the Gr. Lodge of New York, who witnessed the scenes which he describes. Br. *Buek* did not add a word of comment of his own. But besides Br. Röhr, editors of other masonic journals have publicly testified to the same transaction. I enclose you a number of such documents (The Amer. Craftsman, ed. by F. G. Tisdall, I. 6. p. 45 I, 7. p. 51, I. 8. p. 61;—Masonic Mirror ed. by Hynemann VII, 36. p. 431, VII. 38, p. 452;—Masonic Messenger ed. by Drummond N. 1. p. 8). I am, moreover, aware of the details of the scenes, from the verbal communications of participants in them, the well known Br. Herring, Br. Macoy, formerly Dep. Gr. M., and Br. Tisdall, formerly W. M. of St. John's Lodge No. 1. With these facts before you, you in your capacity of Representative, will probably feel it to be a duty, to shield the Committee of the Gr. Lodge, in future, against similar errors.

The Grand Lodge of New York has, for sixty years experienced dissentions in its own midst, always from the same causes. The fact that it has escaped them, for one year, affords no guarantee, that the present condition of things will last, and by no means warrants the Committee in boasting of the existing harmony. Any resident of this place can readily be convinced, from his daily intercourse with American brethren, that not all is gold that glitters, or that is so termed in grandiloquent phrases.

But to return, once more, to my own person: Have you written, that I acted here as the spy of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg? If you really have, it would indeed betray a remnant of the masonic education which you have received in the State of New York, but I should be compelled to demand of you the proof of your assertion. But I cannot believe that, as a member of the Gr. L. of Saxony, you should have forgotten yourself to that degree, for your judgment about me, in other places, is very different. This blunder of the Committee, also, is attribut-

able to the irritation of its chairman Br. King, who was under the influence of a former member of our lodge. It appears that the Committee cannot bear the idea of having the defects of masonic life in America made known to the brotherhood in Europe. All that I have written to Hamburg about them, has rested, as you can readily ascertain, on the writings of American brethren and on the transactions of American Gr. Lodges and has been published in the "Leipzic Gazette" (1853 No. 21 & 44, 1855 No. 29 and 1856 No. 36) in the Circular Correspondence of the Masonic Historical Societies (Engbünde) No. 132 pp. 88—97, No. 133 pp. 69—87, and in the Minutes of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg. I have always combatted the abuses existing here, with open visor, and shall continue to do so. I therefore authorize you to make any use of this letter which may appear proper to you, with friend or foe. If, in my numerous reports, you can discover any deviation from the actual facts, or any erroneous interpretation of the same, I shall always be happy to receive your correction or advice. I only ask that you will communicate it, unhesitatingly, through some public medium, and I shall adopt the same course if I shall feel the necessity of a defence.

In conclusion, I am impelled to observe, that Pythagoras Lodge No. 1 will not allow itself to be swayed from the path which it has conceived to be right, by any address or circular to the Gr. Lodges of America and Europe from a Grand Lodge, whose members can write such reports as that of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Grand Lodge of New York. The latter has not a particle of authority over us, and as freemen we are proud enough to consider ourselves, at least, its equals.

In the hope that you will recognize the frankness of my language as called for by the importance of the case, and wishing that this reply to your reports, which have been so grossly abused here, may serve to pave the way for an understanding between us two, who are masons, members of one fraternity, I am with fraternal greeting,

RICHARD BARTHELMESS,
W. M. of Pythagoras Lodge No. 1

Brooklyn, Aug. 26, 1859.

VI.

Reply of Bro. von Mensch to Bro. Barthelmess.

Respected Brother,

Your friendly and very elaborate letter of the 26th of August reached me only yesterday from Hamburg, having probably come by sailing vessel, and, although sick, I would not willingly leave it unanswered a single day.

I beg, respected Brother, to ask your indulgence, if, from a sick man's want of humor for writing, and owing to the limited time allowed me, I shall pass over in silence much, that you have the goodness to communicate and that is both new and of interest to me. My position, moreover, prescribes this course, as you will readily perceive and concede.

Candor also compels me to admit my consciousness of my inadequate strength to attempt to refute a man of your learning and ability, in cases, when I believe, that other aspects than the one you present, may be gained of the same subject; in other words, where I consider the right to be upon the side of the Gr. Lodge of New York-among other things, in regard to the right of jurisdiction.

I am not, as it will scarcely be necessary for me to mention, a learned man like yourself, who has received his education at universities and is efficient at a discussion, but even my knowledge of masonic history, literature, and usages, is only of a limited kind and extent, and not being your equal in this respect, you would receive but little satisfaction from entering into a discussion with me. I do not wish, however, to be understood to say by this, that I am wanting in appreciation of the explanations, with which you honor me, nor that they are without value for me, much less do I intend, by what I have mentioned, to avoid the responsibility attaching to me for anything that I have said or done. What I have asserted, in those three reports of mine, to the Gr. Lodge of Saxony, with which you are acquainted, as likewise what I have written to the Grand Lodge of New York, I have, upon the whole, stated in conformity with my best knowledge and belief, and from my own conviction, and in so doing I have carefully avoided to advance, knowingly, any false conception or representation. I am, however, sure, in view of the picture which the contents of your letter present to me, of your character and disposition, that you will not find it wrong, if, as its representative, I promoted, without waiting instructions, the interest of the Grand Lodge of New York, according to the best of my ability.

It will, however, suffice in the main to modify, materially, your views of the active share I took in this matter, if I, unreservedly and on my word as a mason, give you the following assurances, which, moreover, I consider myself in duty bound to do.

Let me only premise, that up to this moment, I have received neither the "Transactions of the Grand Lodge of New York" nor the Circular of the latter to the Grand Lodges, which was to be issued. Toward the end of June, however, I received, preliminarily, the stitched proof sheets of the report of the Committee of Foreign Correspondence.

It is self-evident that I have not written to the Grand Secretary Br. D. James Austin, or to any one else, "Mr. Barthelmess acts as the spy" (pag. 135) I have, on the contrary, expressly remonstrated, on the 11th of July, with Br. Austin, against this expression as pretending to have been used by myself. I have desired him to erase the word and moreover requested our representative, Br. W. Wagner (Maidenlane No. 44½), on the 1st of July, to support my demand with Brother Austin, at the same time calling their attention to the fact, that my three reports were filled with errors of the press, which perverted their meaning. From your letter, however, I partly see and partly conclude, that the one as well as the others have been left unaltered, perhaps because my remonstrance and remarks came too late. You would oblige me, by causing my friend, the upright and truthful Br. Wagner, to corroborate these facts. I send him a duplicate of this letter unsealed.

On the other hand, I admit, that I have been under the impression, that it had been you, who had prejudiced the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg against the American Lodges, by your aversion against the Ancient York rite, so-called, (an aversion which is known here in general terms) as well as by your descriptions of masonic work in the United States. And your letter does, in candor, not deny the fact, although I now perceive, that the effect has been produced by you, mediately and without malicious intent, by your reports of personal observations.

It is self-evident, from the last column of the report of the Committee (pag. 134), and needs no assurance from me, that the sentence in parenthesis, "the hope," was, likewise, not written by me.

I further assure you (and you must not think the less of me on that account) that I do not now, nor have I ever, read the "Leipzic Freemason's Gazette," (with the exception, perhaps, of an occasional glance at a number, happening to lie open in our lodge building) and have never seen any article written by you or, in fact, on American affairs. Neither do I read other masonic periodicals, nor have I read the circular, which the Grand Lodge of Hamburg addressed to the other European Grand Lodges in regard to the recognition of the colored lodges in the United States and Liberia. I merely read that part of the minutes of the Hamburg Grand Lodge having reference to this Circular, or rather, only the extract therefrom in the minutes No. 47 of the Grand Lodge of Saxony, which, however, was not translated into English by me.

Without enlarging on the subject, these few remarks may suffice. But for whatever other matters the New York Committee may have chosen to advance, of their own accord, I cannot assume any responsibility. These are conceptions and omissions for which the committee alone is responsible.

For the rest, respected Brother, I thank you for the sterling explanations and instructions contained in your letter, as well as for the spirit of frankness, candor and calmness that pervades the same! In future, in case, as I do not anticipate, occasion should offer again, you will ever find me equally unbiased and loyal, and in this mutual position I think we shall be perfectly agreed. It remains for me only deeply to regret, that the rupture between the Grand Lodge of New York and your lodges appears to be so wide and unlikely to be healed; I had always hoped to see an understanding arrived at, in one way or another, between the highly respected and worthy Gr. M. Brother Lewis Jr. and yourselves. The W. Gr. Lodge of Hamburg would, undoubtedly, have exercised the self-denial necessary to dismiss your lodges, where it is for the good of the whole order, and not being under any constraint in New York as regards system, ritual, &c., your lodges might certainly have done a great deal of good. I can and shall not alter my conviction that, for the general good, you ought not to have separated from the Grand Lodge of your State.

Accept the expression of my esteem with my fraternal greeting

Dresden, Oct. 9th, 1859.

F. A. von MENSCH.

VII.

Supplement to the Minutes of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg No. 77.

The Resolutions of the Gr. Lodge of New York in consequence of the Report of its Committee on Foreign Correspondence, concerning the exclusive territorial jurisdiction claimed by it, and the question on the recognition of the colored Lodges, broached by the Grand Lodge of Hamburg.

Reply of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg

The Report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Gr. Lodge of New York of June 9th last opens with congratulations on the peace and harmony which have prevailed, with but few and insignificant exceptions, among the Grand Lodges and Lodges of the U. S. and then proceeds thus:

"There is but a ripple on the broad surface of our masonic union to disturb the repose, or impair the hopes, or mar the harmony of our fraternity. This ripple consists in the puny offsprings of Hamburg, which in this jurisdiction—in this city—still maintain a sullen exstence, and a dogged defiance to the solemn edicts and resolutions of not only this Gr. Lodge, but of nearly all others in the United States. This is not all; the parent body of these offsprings, across the Atlantic, is seeking to wreak its vengeance upon the fraternity of the U. S. for the reprobation with which its acts and its illegitimate subordinates have been visited, by arousing the prejudices of the Gr. Lodges of Europe against us, and by crowding upon the notice of our state jurisdictions objects and questions which are fraught with calamity to the peace of the fraternity. Cool nerves and wise counsels will alone avert the dangers with which these objects and questions threaten us. These dangers are yet far away, but now is the time to meet them, when no immediate difficulties are at hand."

After these remarks, the introduction of the report refers, for the facts which have called them forth, to a later passage which will presently be considered. But first we will give place to the resolutions which the Committee base upon the same. They are as follows:

6. "Resolved, That the course pursued and the views expressed by the R. W. F. A. von Mensch, the able and faithful representative of the Grand Lodge of New York near that of Saxony in relation to the illiberal and unmasonic policy of the Grand Lodge of Hamburg for persisting in the violation of the jurisdictional rights of this Grand Lodge, and for seeking to create dissentions between the Grand Lodges of Europe and America, is warmly approved and commended, and the thanks of this Grand Lodge are hereby tendered him therefor.

7. Resolved, That the Committee on Foreign Correspondence be instructed to draw up a circular letter to the Grand Lodge and Grand Orients of Europe and America, respecting the unwarranted course pursued by the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, in seeking to produce discord in this jurisdiction, and among the Grand Lodges of the world, and fraternally soliciting such action thereupon as the exigencies of the case require; and after its submission to and approval by the Grand

Master, that it be then forwarded to such Grand Lodges and Grand Orients.

8. Resolved, That the Grand Lodge of New York regards with painful emotions the attempt being made by the Grand Lodge of Hamburg herself to recognize and to induce the other Grand Lodges of Europe to recognize bodies of colored men in the United States as Masonic Lodges and Grand Lodges, when it is a notorious fact that no legal organization of the kind exists in the American Union; and that the adoption of any measures tending to this end by any Grand Lodge whatever, must be regarded by this Grand Lodge as the evidence of a desire on the part of the body thus acting to cease all masonic intercourse with the Grand Lodges of the United States and their constituents."

The resolution of thanks to the R. W. Br. von Mensch would not have been mentioned in this place at all if it were not that, in connection with the same, one of the grievances charged against the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg was stated in a more direct manner than in any other passage of the report, viz.: the alleged infringements of the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge. Neither is it intended, by its quotation, to cast the least slur upon the R. W. Br. von Mensch. We will on the contrary for the present suppose that his acts, which, it is true, do not appear very friendly towards us, have been no more than his official duty as the representative of the Gr. Lodge of New York. It is not his fault that his reports have been translated with manifold and spiteful distortions; no more is it his fault that expressions have been foisted in which he asserts that he never used; or that the statement, as though it were not spicy enough in itself, has been interlarded with alleged facts, which lack every particle of truth.

It is not true, as the report says on p. 135, that Br. von Mensch has designated Br. Barthelmess, W. M. of our daughter Lodge Pythagoras No. 1, and an ornament of the fraternity, as a "spy" of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg; it is, on the contrary true that this expression, emanating from the pen of the reporter, has been retained against the distinct protest of Br. von Mensch; it is an equally arbitrary interpolation of the reporter's that he makes our Gr. Master express "the hope" that the reconciliation, which last year had put an end to the melancholy and unbrotherly dispute between the two Gr. Lodges of New York, would not be of long duration. Again, it is not true, as is stated in the report, that the minutes of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg of last November showed, that the Gr. Master had expressed his "joy" at the disturbances which had defiled the solemnities in the Gr. Lodge of New York upon the occasion of the transatlantic cable celebration (scenes which even American papers mention with the utmost indignation.) It is, finally, a most unmitigated invention, that the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg should, at any time or anywhere, have expressed the purpose or the wish, to invite the colored lodges of America to recognize her, the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, as their mother Grand Lodge, and join her as daughter and provincial lodges. To be sure, without such representations it would have been difficult to crown them by the final exclamation

"What a spirit does such a feeling present? It is that of a savage."

In making these quotations, we can hardly suppress one misgiving, viz.: that it may appear unbrotherly to give a wider circulation to acts and expressions, which emanate from lodges, and yet lack every vestige of a fraternal disposition. This fear, however, is allayed by the fact that the Gr. Lodge of New York itself has already seen to the circulation of the report in such a manner that nothing hardly remains to be done by us, having distributed it, printed, to all grand lodges and lodges with which it is in correspondence. We will, therefore, only allude to some points which, in self defence, we cannot pass by in silence, and abstain for the rest from all reproaches, recriminations, or censure about events which do not immediately concern us, although the report may, in its general contents, present a rich mine in this respect. The reports of Br. von Mensch, contained in the minutes of the Grand Lodge of Saxony of 14th of October 1858, 5th of Jan. and 11th of April 1859, have, besides, elicited an answer from our M. W. and beloved Br. Dr. Barthelmess which exalts the latter equally as a man, as a reasoner, and as an erudite connoisseur of masonic history and masonic law. We shall presently recur to the same. But it is first our duty to meet the charges brought against us by the Gr. Lodge of New York, and in which it goes to the length of speaking about "a crime which the other European Gr. Lodges would be very careful not to imitate" (p. 126, l. 12), and to reduce them to their actual merits. The Gr. Lodge of Hamburg will never consciously lend a hand to a wrong; but neither will she ever be wanting in courage to defend that which she has recognized as right and does so recognize.

I.

The first charge concerns the infringements of the alleged jurisdiction of the Gr. Lodge of New York by the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, by affiliating Pythagoras Lodge No. 1, now in Brooklyn, and by constituting Franklin Lodge No. 2 in New York. These two facts are conceded by us, but we must distinctly deny that there is, as alleged, anything wrong, unlawful or unmasonic in them. This involves a question of fact and one of law. Let us first look at the fact.

Here, then, we read in the American reports of "invasions" which the Hamburg Gr. Lodge is said to have made into that territory, in tales which strongly recall the Anglo-American quarrel about Oregon territory, as though steps had been taken on the part of Hamburg, by strategem or violence, to make American lodges desert their obligations, or, as the Americans are pleased to term it, their "fealty" to their masonic tribunal, and to win them over to us. But how stands the case in reality? Our Minutes of Nov. 9th 1850, Febr. 8th and Aug. 21st 1851, and of May 9th and Nov. 7th 1853 give the most explicit and the most unequivocal answer. They show, that Br. C. F. Bauer, formerly our representative with the Gr. Lodge of New York, now one of the authors and signers of those charges against us,—by which, to be sure, he has raised a charge against himself from which no honest tribunal can acquit him,—that this same C. F. Bauer, in a letter dated Aug. 20th 1850, communicated to our Gr. M., most unexpectedly to him, the fact that Pythagoras Lodge had, on the 16th of August, resolved to demand its

dismissal from the Gr. Lodge of New York and to place itself under the protection of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg. They show further, that a second despatch of the same Br. C. F. Bauer, of Dec. 11th of the same year, has transmitted an official letter of Pythagoras Lodge, of Sept. 25th, signed by all the members of the lodge then present in New York, 45 in number, by which it reports: that it had presented to the Gr. Lodge of New York its petition for dismissal, that it now (then) considered itself as an independent lodge, and requested the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg to recognize it as a daughter lodge, and for this purpose to transmit as soon as possible charter, rituals, and all other necessary papers. As the decisive reason for this step, all the transactions mention the dsicord in the fraternity in New York, which had grown past indurance, originating in the open feud between the two Gr. Lodges of the State, which we will pass in silence, all the more because it has become only too generally known, and because we do not wish to lay ourselves open to the charge of ripping up old sores, scarcely healing. But the following passage from that letter must, nevertheless, not be omitted in this place:

> "It is possible that, hereafter, when we shall actually belong to your Gr. Lodge, the Gr. Lodge of this place will not recognize us as a regular lodge, and it may come to pass that most of the other Gr. Lodges of the U. S. follow her example; but we are prepared even for this worst case, if it shall prove to be unavoidable, and if you, beloved brethren, do not succeed in coming to an understanding on this matter with the Gr. Lodge in New York. In the course of time we may perhaps still know how to bring about a recognition on the part of the American lodges. We have come to the positive and irrevocable resolution to place ourselves under your protection, and persist therein, come what may. We will give reality to the heart-stirring symbol of the masonic chain which entwines the hearts of brethren in the remotest orients and will strengthen evermore, to the utmost of our ability, the ties of brotherly love which unite the brethren of the old and new worlds."

The further transactions bear witness, how earnestly our Gr. Lodge has itself called the attention of the brethren in New York to the serious consequences which their determination might entail; but that the brethren of New York became only the more urgent; and that the consent on our part was given only on the 8th of February 1851, with the distinct proviso: that Pythagoras Lodge had positively severed its connection with the Gr. Lodge of New York and therefore was to be considered as an independent lodge.

It is not for us to inquire whether it was politic on the part of our Gr. Lodge, thus to embark in an almost certain controversy, being the Gr. Lodge of a state whose inhabitants count perhaps by tens of thousands to as many millions in the United States. It has acted in the conviction of acting according to law and masonic duty. It still holds to that conviction, and is therefore resolved to defend its acts before all the world. It is not its intention, thereby to impose new duties upon the brethren of its daughter lodges beyond the sea; but as long as the latter stand faithfully to it, it will know how to justify the confidence of which it has been thought worthy. And just as the Gr. Lodge of

Hamburg, when those apprehensions had been realized, when the Gr. Lodge of New York refused to recognize our daughter lodges in that place, shutting the doors of its halls against their members, and breaking off all intercourse with us,—in no manner changed its previous amicable bearing towards American brethren; just so will it hereafter bid everybody welcome who approaches it in a friendly spirit.

We have said that the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, in the matter under consideration, had acted, as it thought, according to law and masonic duty. The two should be inseparable; but in as much as the latter is more a matter of feeling and the former principally one of difference to prescribed forms, our examination of the case must be directed to either separately. To begin, then, with the question of feeling, we find all advices which reach us concerning lodge life in America unanimous on this point, that a hollow ceremonial (Formenwesen) overruns with a luxurious growth all nobler germs, and that the republican American even outstrips the monarchical European in matters of titles, ribbons &c. Thus, for instance, do the sons of Cromwell's Puritans dubb themselves Knights Templars, and in their meetings bewail the crisis of 1857 (Compare London Freemason's Magazine 1858—1859). This being the condition of things, and our German brethren not finding, in the system pervading American lodge life, in the form and spirit of the prevailing mode of work, that guidance for the regulation of their own masonic work which they desired; finding themselves, on that account, dissatisfied, and believing, that contentment could be regained only by a return to the accustomed German method; and, finally, expressing this conviction to our Gr. Lodge as plainly as is shown by the above quotation, and by the entire correspondence; this being the case, we ask, could the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg close heart and ear against such arguments?

As a masonic tribunal, our Gr. L. could not escape perceiving, that to remain in the relations until then obtaining, with feelings so heterogeneous, would be most unprofitable for all parties, but especially for the spirit of freemasonry, and that a dissolution or total isolation of that German lodge would inevitably result therefrom. It was proper that our Grand Lodge should reflect seriously before taking upon itself the responsibility of such a result. It had to consider, that, not thousands or tens of thousands, but millions of Germans live in the United States, who had gone thither to find that political and social freedom which they believed to be wanting in their own native land, but not for the purpose of having quite new fetters put upon them in that, which, even in the most despotic countries, is deemed inviolable, the feeling of man's own breast.

One spirit only, to be sure, should actuate all freemasonry; it might, therefore, be thought possible for a German to find it also in American lodges; but as it is to touch all strings of the human heart, to give them a higher and more refined tuning, this is again coupled with conditions purely human, and where these are disregarded, the strings become mute, relax or break. Do not these human conditions assert their right even in what is divine on earth, in religion,—the religious feelings, which centre in the worship of one almighty God and Creator, diverging so far in the rites of worship, that one person cannot acquiesce in those

of another These conditions spring from descent, language, education, and that national contemplation of the world and its contents, which is based on them. But these are not extraneous matters which admit of being thrown aside, like a garment, and which can be unceremoniously left at the gates of the temple. No, they are all but inseparably entwined with the innermost heart of man, and where they receive a fostering care, they are the source of much spontaneous beauty. That German spontaneity and German character (Art und Weise) contains the nucleus of much that is sterling and beautiful, should least of all be overlooked by the North Americans, who, though they may claim an Anglo-American, Anglo-Saxon, or even a Batavo-American origin, still are intrinsically of German descent. Nothing, however, is more conducive to the beneficial development of those conditions of the heart than the beautiful and sublime art of freemasonry; and if it be let alone in its quiet lodges, it will of itself work the gradual disappearance of all that which still separates.

But if the German brethren of Pythagoras Lodge in New York have found themselves cramped in that development by remaining longer in the lodge association of that state, if they have believed that it would be better furthered by an alliance with the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, and if they, therefore, have appealed to the protection of the latter, the latter as the German Grand Lodge of a German city, would have shown itself little worthy of its position, had it been deterred from responding to this appeal, from fear of difficulties which thereby might arise for itself.

The case is similar with regard to its relation to Franklin Lodge No. 2 in New York, which at a later date sprung from Pythagoras No. 1, the daughter lodge of our Grand Lodge. Similar cases may occur with other German lodges in other parts of the United States. For German masonry spreads everywhere with German colonization, and, as we are certain, that none but a spirit of civilization and brotherly love will breathe from their lodges, the Grand Lodge of Hamburg, when appealed to for its protection for the furtherance of these works of peace, will never refuse it, unless state laws forbid it, to which it always renders respect and obedience.

And here we come to the question of law of the case.

This question, also, can be disposed of, no less completely than the first. Above all, the pretension of the Grand Lodge of New York is supported by no state law. This is so true, that the Grand Lodge itself declares: precisely because there is no such law, nor the probability of obtaining one, has the agreement been made between the Gr. lodges of the several states, that the jurisdiction of but one Gr. L. shall be recognized in each state. It would indeed, also, be passing strange, if the public law of the United States, which guarantees its citizens the right of assembly to the largest extent, should make an exception, respecting the masonic fraternity, the most respectable of all associations. But how painful a restraint it would be, were emigrated freemen, who have become citizens of the United States, to be forbidden to associate for moral and spiritual purposes, unless under rules and forms, repulsive to their language, habits and customs, needs no demonstration. If the

Gr. Lodges of the United States make such a law for themselves, they thereby assume a position contradictory to the common public law of the land. It follows, as a matter of course, that it is a treaty law, binding upon those parties only, who by treaty have submitted to its restrictions, and only for so long as they are bound by the treaty. For all other lodges it is of no binding force whatever, and one of those, who had bound themselves can be prevented from abrogating the compact. Proof is, indeed, by no means wanting, that this is actually done. Suffice it to mention, in this connection, the case of Holland Lodge, No. 8 in New York, one of the most respected lodges in that city, which, on the 17th of August 1855, has declared itself independent, publishing its reasons therefore in a special document. (Address of Holland Lodge No. 8 to their Masonic Brethren, August 1855.) We refrain at present from following up this argument, for the reason, that we do not wish to raise new criminations; but if it therein speaks of only three other independent lodges in the state of New York, the Deputy Gr. M. of Philipps' Gr. Lodge, Br. Waring, in his address of 7th of June of the same year, says: there are at least five independent lodges every one of which lays claim to a legal existence. The assertion of an unconditional and exclusive territorial jurisdiction is, therefore, equally unfounded in fact and in law. If there should still be the possibility of a doubt on this point, the following remarks of Gr. M. Philipps, from his opening address in the Gr. L. of June 1852, would in itself suffice to remove it:

> "I called the attention of the Gr. L. in my last annual address to the planting of a lodge in our jurisdiction by the Gr. L. of Hamburg, and the lodge Pythagoras was declared to be clandestine, and communication with her members cut off. This Gr. L. has always condemned and resisted any such encroachment on her territorial limits by any foreign body, and so far as the Gr. Lodges of the United States, generally, are concerned, the principle has been ever recognized, that the Gr. Lodges of our states were sovereign, and their limits and jurisdiction should be respected. So far, brethren, as policy and expediency goes, it would seem to be wise at least in a country like ours, numbering over thirty Grand Lodges; but during the past year I have searched in vain for any masonic authority, ancient or modern, by which a Grand Lodge has the right by masonic law (or usage out of the United States of America) to monopolize a certain territorial line and say to other regular Masonic Bodies, authorized to issue charters: "You must not warrant a lodge within the limits we have appropriated for ourselves." If, therefore, Brethren, no such masonic law exists and no universal agreement has taken place between Gr. Lodges to keep within certain limits, are we doing right in holding Pythagoras Lodge, under the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg, as clandestine for that reason? Should freemasons ever act unjustly, even from motives of expedience or policy?"
>
> (Abstr. of the Transact. of the Gr. L. of N. Y. Sept. 2, 1851 to June 4th 1852. New York 1852, p. 11.)

But we are also able, in answer to these questions of the R. W. Br. Philipps, to produce a document, which completely proves, not only that there is no such law or agreement as he has been searching for, but that, on the contrary, the Gr. L. of New York has entered into an agreement, in which it recognizes the opposite principle.

In a formal treaty, entitled "Traité d'Union, d'Alliance, et de Confédération maçonique" (Treaty of Masonic Union, Alliance, and Confederation), concluded on the 23d of February 1834, between the Grand Orients of New York, Brazil, and Buenos Ayres, with that of France,— the Gr. L. of New York being represented upon that occasion by Br. Lafayette, and ratified on the 26th of December 1836, the first of the preliminary fundamental principles is expressed as follows:

I.*

"§ 1. La Franc-Maçonnerie est un culte universal, ayant pour objet Dieu, la Vertu, et qui se partage en différents Rites reconnus et approuvés.

§ 4. Ce culte est essentiellement tolérant et chaque maçon est libre dans le choix q'uil veut professer."

Further:

XII.

"Toute Puissance maçonnique, regulièrement et légalement constituée, dûment recomnue et envestie de la plénitude du pouvoir dogmatique d'un Rit, pour une circonscription territoriale quelconque, a incontestablement et seule le droit de constituer et régir les Ateliers de ce Rit dans tout l'étendue de sa domination."

"Mais ce droit ne peut jamais donner à cetter Puissance celui d'exclure, de défendre, ou d'empêcher une Puissance d'un autre Rit, même d'un Orient étranger, d'accorder aux maçons qui le solicitent d'elle, dans les formes préscrites, les Chartes nécessaires pour établir regulièrement soit des Loges, soit des Chapitres, soit même une Puissance de ce Rit dans l'étendue de la même circonscription territoriale." *

*) But this right can never give to this tribunal that of excluding, forbidding or preventing a tribunal of another rite, even from a foreign Orient, from granting to masons, asking it in the prescribed manner, the necessary charters for the regular establishment of either Lodges, Chapters, or even a Gr. Lodge (Tribune) of this rite in the extent of the same territorial limits.

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*I.

§ 1. Free Masonry is a universal cult, having for its object God, Virtue, and being divided into different recognized and approved rites.

§ 4. This cult is sssentially tolerant, and every mason is free in the choice which he will follow.

XII.

Every masonic tribunal, regularly and legally constituted, duly recognized and invested, with the fulness of the dogmatic power of a rite, for any given territorial limit, has incontestably and alone the right of making and governing lodges of this rite within the entire extent of its dominion.

It would therefore be incumbent upon the Gr. Lodge of New York to prove, that, and for what reason, it is no longer bound by this treaty.

The first of the two questions of the R. W. Br. Philipps, quoted above, is probably sufficiently answered by the foregoing remarks; the second contains its own answer. The Americans may say: "We exclude the German brethren working under a foreign constitution; an American brother will not easily be exposed to exclusion from lodges in Germany;" but is this a wise policy, if policy is to be considered at all, and aside from the fact that that never is a wise policy which conflicts with moral laws? The Grecians applied the term of Barbarian to all Non-Grecians. Do we, indeed, live in an age when similar terms are deemed appropriate and fit for every foreigner? That, then, should be the fruit of an accelerated intercourse by railroads, steamers and telegraphs? The laying of the Atlantic cable should, then, have been celebrated with enthusiastic joy, merely because London and Paris quotations would reach the New York exchange so much more quickly? We see our public squares in part adorned by houses of worship in which foreign congregations meet for their devotions; we rejoice in the peaceful intercourse with German brethren of other systems, who have erected their lodges in our midst; no less would we hail it as a joyful event if brethren of foreign lodges residing in this city were to organize masonic congregations of their own, and erect their own temples for the purpose of working in them, according to their own rites. It is, in fact, not long since, that a Portuguese lodge existed here, organized by emigrants, and chartered by the Grand Orient of France, which worked in the Portuguese language, and at whose disposal the daughter lodges of the Gr. Lodge of Hamburg had fraternally placed their lodge house for this work. We cannot believe that an opposite course should be deemed a sound policy in North America. It will be difficult to convince us, that it should not be the most consoling and satisfactory feeling to all Grand Bodies to know that wherever brethren of their lodges may meet on the face of the globe, they will be permitted to continue their masonic work under the constitution of the mother lodge of their home.

The execution of this fundamental idea, by a fixed law of universal validity, is fraternally recommended by the Gr. L. of Hamburg to all Grand Bodies and Independent Lodges. The treaty which has been quoted would readily admit of such an enlargement.

II.

With regard to the second charge against the Gr. L. of Hamburg, concerning the recognition of lodges of black or colored brethren, the facts bearing upon the question are open to everybody's inspection who is willing to occupy himself therewith. They are contained in the circular of our Gr. Lodge of May 1858 and do not extend beyond what is therein contained, viz: a reference to the necessity of deciding the question, whether colored persons, negroes or mulattoes, who otherwise fulfil all conditions of a true freemason shall not be initiated, merely because they are colored, or whether colored brethren shall be sent away from our portals also, merely because they are refused admittance into the American lodges? At the same time, the circular calls for information

concerning the mooted question about the regularity of the lodges and grand lodges of colored persons existing in Liberia, in Africa, and in the United States.*) The cause which gave rise to this circular, also, is perfectly plain. It is contained in the Minutes of the Gr. L. of 27th. of Febr. § 7.**) which shows that direct proposals for recognition had been addressed by several members of the lodge to our Gr. Master which, however, he had hesitated to respond to, until the legality of that lodge per se should have been placed beyond a doubt. That is all, and the Report of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence of the Gr. L. of New York might as well have spared the long array of questions: What in the world induced the Gr. L. of Hamburg to busy itself about the colored brethren? As, also, the somewhat ridiculous invention, that our Gr. L. contemplated arrogating to itself the protectorate over all the colored lodges of America.

In the abstract, the question whether a colored person can be a freemason at all, probably also answers itself. It is, indeed, not at all disputed in the United States. On the contrary we might be certain of witnessing a considerable excitement, should it occur to a German lodge, not to recognize a lodge of red-skins, which one of the states should have established among the Seminoles, Chippewas, Cherokees, or by what names the tribes may go. Neither is it the black color, for the American lodges would consider it a crime to refuse admission to a Hindostanee or Malay, were he even blacker than the blackest Abyssinian, nay even to an African Jew, whilst at the same time they look upon it as a crime of no less magnitude, to admit a mulatto or a mestee, and worst of all a negro, even though he were descended in a direct line from the Moorish King in the gospel, or though he were a martyr for freedom, like Toussaint l'Ouverture.

The whole question might, therefore, appear trivial, had it not a very serious aspect by its close connection with the baneful negro slavery, which still exists in a large portion of the United States. For this reason it will most certainly be treated here with all the seriousness it deserves.

According to the fundamental principles of freemasonry, as practised in Europe, it is, however, not a matter of the least doubt, that, when a free man of good repute knocks at our portals, the mere difference of color cannot be made a bar against his initiation or admission. In reality this is not directly disputed, even by the Gr. Lodge of New York which confines itself to declaring, that the documents, upon which the colored lodges base their claims for recognition as regular lodges, are spurious and insufficient, whilst it refuses, for its own part, to grant them charters. For us, it is, of course, very difficult, if not impossible, to decide with apodictical certainty on the genuineness or sufficiency of those Documents, notwithstanding all that our beloved Br. Barthelmess has collected on the subject, with great care and painstaking. It would, to be sure, appear as though the proof had been furnished by the Masonic Journal, which we will quote, that the charter granted, in 1784, by the Gr. Lodge of England to a certain Prince Hall and fellows, for the African

*) The circular is printed in full, p. 10 of this pamphlet.

**) The passage from the minutes is printed in full, p. 6 of this pamphlet.

Lodge in Boston had indeed been intended for a lodge of colored persons, which does not follow from the name alone. For the Journal speaks of historical researches concerning the city of Boston, in which connection mention is also made of the negroes and negro-slavery in the state of Massachusetts. Dr. Bollnapp, who had been consulted, repeatedly alludes in an eulogistic way to the said Prince Hall and ends by saying: "Having once and again mentioned this person, I must inform you that he is Gr. Master of a lodge of Freemasons, composed wholly of Blacks, and distinguished by the name of 'African Lodge.' It was begun in 1775 while this town was garrisoned by British troops, some of whom held a Lodge and initiated a number of negroes."

What remains to be ascertained, although here also our beloved Br. Barthelmess adduces a number of reasons, which make it appear probable, is: whether the United Gr. Lodge in New York, a colored lodge organized in 1848, really is in possession of the genuine charter of 1784, and whether it is to be considered the legal successor of the original African Lodge of Boston. On this point probably the Gr. Lodge of England alone is in a position to give judgment binding upon all parties. Whether it is sufficient, that no protest has been entered by it, we do not venture to decide. But as the English nation has made immense sacrifices of money and men for the emancipation of negro slaves in her own colonies, and for the prevention of the slave trade on the coast of Africa, the Grand Lodge of England will, surely, not hesitate cheerfully to respond to any just wish of free colored brethren. Whether it also may be impelled to supply and to heal, by virtue of its own authority, deficiencies or defects, which may be found in the proofs and documents of the United Gr. Lodge of colored brethren in New York, in order that that, which may appear imperfect, may be made regular, is for itself to decide in its own wisdom. It may, at all events, be taken for granted that it will not withdraw its hand, if a petition should be addressed to it from Liberia, for the establishment of a lodge or Provincial Gr. Lodge, and the latter would then have the power to come to the assistance of its colored brethren in the United States.

It is hardly necessary to say how gratifying it would be, if the Gr. Lodge of New York and the other Gr. Lodges of the non-slave-holding states would lend a brotherly hand for the furtherance of such a solution. It will undoubtedly cost them very great resignation. But that is one of the very cardinal virtues to which freemasonry is to guide us. We should, therefore, shrink from no sacrifice, not even from that of our habits and prejudices, as soon as the question is of practising love.

But to our colored brethren in the United States who would then say: "be content, for the present, with what you have obtained; devote yourselves, in retirement, to the work in your lodges without wishing to obtrude your company upon those to whom you know that you are not yet welcome guests; show thereby your masonic self-command, from regard for the weakness of your brethren, and rest assured that, if you only continue to labor for your own development, the moment of recognition will not fail to come, and the hand which as yet is averted will itself open the doors for your admission.

SO BE IT:

Hamburg, February 3, 1860.

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